

Florida

*Fishing • Hunting
• Conservation •
Outdoor Recreation*

WILDLIFE

Quail—The Big Little Bird
All Around Hunting Gun

DECEMBER 1968

The Florida Magazine for all Sportsmen

25 CENTS



Florida Wildlife Scrapbook



THE RARE
BLUE WHALE
IS THE LARGEST
ANIMAL ON EARTH • IT
WEIGHS UP TO 150 TONS
• AT BIRTH A BABY BLUE
WHALE IS AS LARGE AS A
FULL GROWN ELEPHANT

THE **BOBCAT**
CAN SEE VERY WELL
AT NIGHT... ITS EYES
ABSORBING THE FAINTEST
LIGHT... ENABLING IT
TO SEE AND CAPTURE ITS
PREY IN NEAR TOTAL
DARKNESS

NATURE'S FORESTER...
THE **FOX SQUIRREL**
DIGS SHALLOW HOLES AND
BURIES ACORNS AND PECANS
BY THE THOUSANDS • SOME
ARE DUG UP LATER FOR
FOOD • OTHERS SPROUT
AND GROW INTO TREES

BUSY DAY AND NIGHT
THE **FIELD MOUSE**
EATS ITS OWN WEIGHT
IN GRASS, BARK & SEEDS
EVERY 24 HOURS

NATURE NOTES

Florida WILDLIFE

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DECEMBER 1968

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State of Florida

★

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The Cover

Offering challenging speed on the wing, the Bobwhite Quail is probably wing-shooter's number one choice for sport of game bird hunting. The hen, above, is more brownish in color—the males, as shown, have outstanding white on head and neck. See page 20.

From A Painting By Wallace Hughes

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Firearms Fact Pack

Too MANY sportsmen find, when confronted with the task of contacting their legislators on firearms bills, that they are limited in their knowledge of the subject in relation to the nation's crime rate, according to John Marsman of the Savage Arms Co.

They find that legislators want to know more than just the fact that a constituent is opposed to or in favor of a particular measure. In the case of the interested sportsman, the individual who wants to keep informed on the issue, the danger lies in not being able to correct the distorted and fabricated information disseminated by the anti-gun factions.

A booklet is now available to help sportsmen in both situations. Titled, **THE FACT PACK**, it consists of seven documented studies, represents the most basic research ever made on firearms and crime, and uses the FBI as its principal source of statistics. It's been published by the National Shooting Sports Foundation and is available at the low cost of \$1 per copy.

Briefly, the studies show there is no significant difference in crime rates between states having firearms licensing and those that do not; that firearms are involved in a very small percentage of serious crimes; that crime rates have increased as the proportion of a given population possessing firearms goes down.

Every sportsman should own a copy of **THE FACT PACK**. With a hysterical nation demanding total firearms registration, and legislators bending under the pressure, it is imperative that every gun owner be thoroughly informed on the issue so that his defense will be logical and accurate.

Copies of the booklet may be obtained from the National Shooting Sports Foundation, 1075 Post Road, Riverside, Conn. 06878.

Florida Hunting Season

Northwest Region

DEER & BEAR: November 16 through January 19.

TURKEY: Fall Season—November 16 through January 19.
Spring Season—March 22 through April 6.

QUAIL & SQUIRREL: November 16 through March 2.

Shooting Hours—resident game

One-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset; except Spring Turkey Season when shooting hours will be one-half hour before sunrise to 12-noon, only.

The color illustrated 1968-1969 Summary of Fresh Water Fishing and Hunting regulations can be obtained at County Judge offices, and the Commission offices listed on page 3. The 24-page summary contains general hunting and fishing regulations and information, bag limits, license fees, region map and hunting dates, plus colorful illustrations of Florida's native game animals, birds and fish.

Waterfowl—Ducks, Geese and Coot

Seasons: Two Phase—November 28, 1968 through December 1, 1968
December 14, 1968 through January 14, 1969

Shooting Hours: One-half hour before sunrise to sunset.

Bag Limits	Daily Limit	Possession Limit
Ducks	4 (see notes below)	8
Geese	1	2
Coot	10	20

The daily bag limit on ducks, other than mergansers, may not include more of the following species than: (a) 2 wood ducks; (b) 2 black ducks; (c) 2 mallards; (d) one only of either the canvasback or redhead.

The possession limit on ducks, other than mergansers, may not include more of the following species than: (a) 4 wood ducks; (b) 4 black ducks; (c) 4 mallards; (d) one only of either the canvasback or redhead.

The limits on American, red-breasted and hooded mergansers, in the aggregate of these species, are 5 daily and 10 in possession, of which not more than 1 daily and 2 in possession may be hooded mergansers.

Leon County and Lake Miccosukee in Jefferson County: Waterfowl hunting permitted only on phase opening days, Nov. 29, Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays. The use of outboard motors is prohibited on Lake Iamonia and portions of Lake Jackson during the open seasons for waterfowl hunting.

There will be a special scaup-only hunting season in certain areas of the state from January 16 through January 31 (after the regular waterfowl hunting season). During the special 16-day season, only scaup ducks, also called "bluebill" and "broadbill," may be taken. The daily bag limit is 5; possession limit 10. No shooting will be permitted within 200 yards of any main shoreline during the scaup-only season. Florida's delineated scaup-only hunting areas are: All open waters of Charlotte Harbor from the Florida Power and Light power line 4 miles east of the U.S. Highway 41 bridge on the Peace River and from El Jobean bridge (State Road 776) on the Myakka River to a line running from Boca Grande Pass east through Bokeelia to the mainland. All open waters of Tampa Bay. All open waters of Sarasota Bay south to the Albee Road bridge. All open waters of Estero Bay. All open waters of Lemon Bay. All open waters of Mosquito Lagoon south to an east-west line at the north end of Pelican Island. All open waters of the Banana River from the NASA Causeway south. All open waters of the Indian River. All open waters of Biscayne Bay lying south of an east-west line through the center of Featherbed Banks to and including Barnes Sound.

Waterfowl hunters must have a 1968-69 Federal Migratory Waterfowl Hunting Stamp before hunting waterfowl (ducks and geese). The stamp is not required for hunting coots. Available from any U.S. Post Office at a cost of \$3.00, the "duck stamp" is required of all waterfowl hunters 16 years of age and older.

Information 1968-1969

Northeast Region

DEER & BEAR: November 9 through January 5. No open season on Bear in Levy County.

TURKEY: No open seasons in Suwannee County or in that portion of Columbia County south of State Road 240 and west of State Road 47. No fall season in Alachua County.

Other counties—Fall Season: November 9 through January 5.

Spring Season: March 22 through April 6.

QUAIL & SQUIRREL: November 9 through February 23.

WILD HOG: Alachua County—November 9 through January 5.

Central Region

DEER & BEAR: November 9 through January 5.

TURKEY: Fall Season—November 9 through January 5.

Spring Season—March 8 through March 23, South of State Road 50.

March 22 through April 6, North of State Road 50.

QUAIL & SQUIRREL: November 9 through February 23.

South Florida Region

DEER & BEAR: DeSoto, Hardee, Manatee and Sarasota counties:

November 9 through November 17, and

December 21 through January 5.

Other counties: November 9 through January 5.

TURKEY: Fall Season—Hardee, Manatee and Sarasota counties:

November 9 through November 17, and

December 21 through January 5.

Other counties: November 9 through January 5.

Spring Season—South of State Road 50: March 8 through March 23.

In Hernando County, North of State Road 50:

March 22 through April 6.

QUAIL & SQUIRREL: November 9 through February 23.

Special Regulations: The use of dogs in DeSoto, Hardee, Manatee and Sarasota counties shall be limited to bird dogs, retrievers and slow trail hounds. The use of running hounds or any other dog that can reasonably be considered a dog usable for running deer is specifically prohibited.

Everglades Region

DEER & BEAR: No open season on the Florida Keys of Monroe County.

November 9 through January 5, all other counties.

TURKEY: Fall Season—November 9 through January 19.

Spring Season—March 8 through March 23.

QUAIL & SQUIRREL: November 9 through February 23.

WILD HOG: Palm Beach County—November 9 through January 5.

Woodcock Hunting: November 9 through January 12

Shooting Hours: One-half hour before sunrise to sunset

Bag Limits: Daily Limit 5; Possession Limit 10

Snipe Hunting: November 9 through December 28

Shooting Hours: One-half hour before sunrise to sunset

Bag Limits: Daily Limit 8; Possession Limit 16

Endangered Species

THE U. S. HOUSE of Representatives passed and sent to the Senate the Endangered Species Bill, which includes Congressman Dante B. Fascell's (D.-Fla.) proposals for protecting Florida's dwindling number of alligators.

The legislation, if enacted, would extend present federal law protecting mammals and birds to cover reptiles, amphibians, crustaceans and mollusks.

Under the bill it would become a federal crime to knowingly ship in interstate commerce any animal, dead or alive, taken contrary to state laws. Fascell said that "Florida's alligators would be protected by the new federal provisions, since Florida law already makes it illegal to hunt or kill alligators.

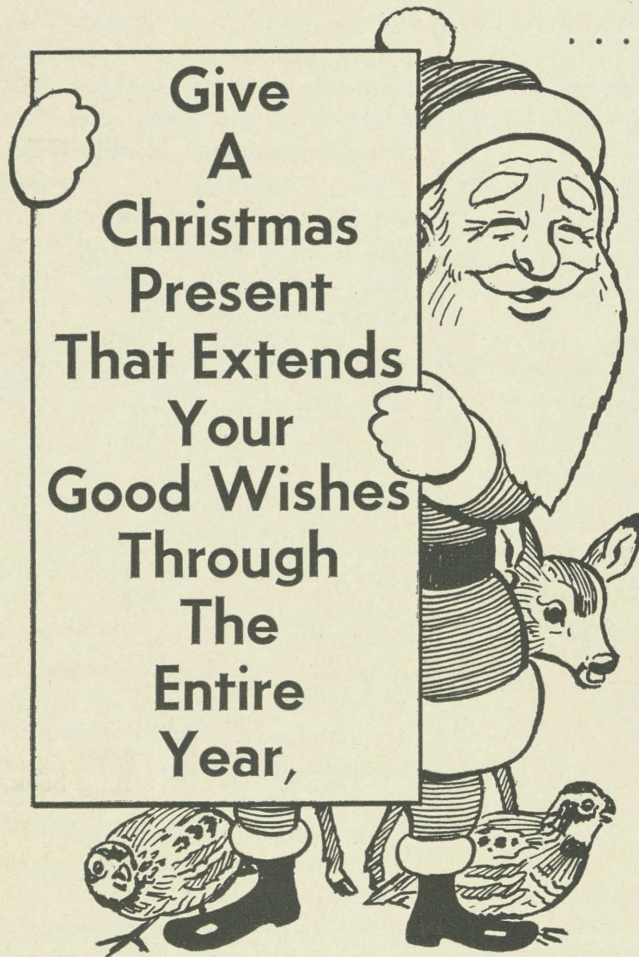
"A large number of alligators have been slaughtered by poachers in search of a quick profit," Fascell noted. "The hides have been shipped from Florida to areas where they can be legally made into products such as shoes and handbags.

"Enactment of the Endangered Species Bill," Fascell continued, "would strengthen federal and state laws and help protect alligators and other species from extinction. The new law would provide penalties of up to 6 months imprisonment and a fine of up to \$1,000 for anyone violating the law," Fascell said.

Other provisions of the Endangered Species Bill would prohibit the importation into the United States of any species certified to be endangered by the Secretary of the Interior after consulting with the foreign country concerned.

The bill would also strengthen provisions prohibiting the importation of certain dangerous animals such as poison frogs. The bill would authorize federal officials to seize any such shipments and arrest those responsible who would be subject to imprisonment of up to 6 months and a fine of up to \$500.

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Weedless Loops

FISHING

a new system introduced for arranging the weedless fly lure with a loop of monofilament strip from near the hook-eye around to shank of the hook

By CHARLES WATERMAN



I HAVE WATCHED roughly 300 fish lost because of poor knots and a large part of them I lost myself. In recent years, however, I am doing better.

There is something psychological about knots, I guess. A man will spend hundreds of dollars to get to the fishing spot of his dreams, hire a guide and boat, rush out to where the fish are supposed to be, work like the devil to get hold of the big fish he's always dreamed of and then lose it because he didn't tie his lure on correctly.

Only a year ago it happened to me with a big bass. I hadn't snugged the knot up properly.

A friend of mine came down here from the North with beautiful tackle that he knew how to use. For several days he toiled to catch a big snook and then when he finally hooked one—you guessed it, No break-off, no cut-off—just a loose knot. Such a thing is almost routine.

Few fish break line or leader at its original strength. Usually it's a poor knot or an accidental wind knot somewhere up the line or leader that initiates the tragedy.

Especially in monofilament, a simple, accidental knot will reduce the strength alarmingly. Test it. Also with mono it is generally necessary to test your lure knot after a few casts. It does strange things when tossed around a few times and many's the time I've reeled in a curlycue tip without the lure.

I am more careless than most and I know the good knots the same as you probably do. Mono is tricky stuff.

Two years ago I made a steelhead trip of thousands of miles and had strikes from only three big fish. Two I landed but the third, which could possibly have been the biggest of all, broke off. I had

been using a fly leader with a 12-pound tippet and tapering up to a 40-pound butt section. The break was in the 30-pound part which had been damaged by contact with a rock—or may have had a wind knot—or may have been weakened near the splice in some way. Anyhow it looked like a clean break but it's possible the leader splicing knot had been beaten to pieces.

When working up a monofilament knot you'll get better results if you moisten it with saliva. It pulls tighter and seems to stay better.

About the only people I know who use truly reliable fishing knots are competitive fishermen and successful guides and charter boat skippers. Everybody else seems to get sloppy now and then.

I am not about to run a page of knots suitable for fishing. I've done that before and the same thing can be found in almost any catalog or fishing book. A maximum of three knots will see you through almost any fishing situation but you have to tie them properly, snug them up and then snug them up again.

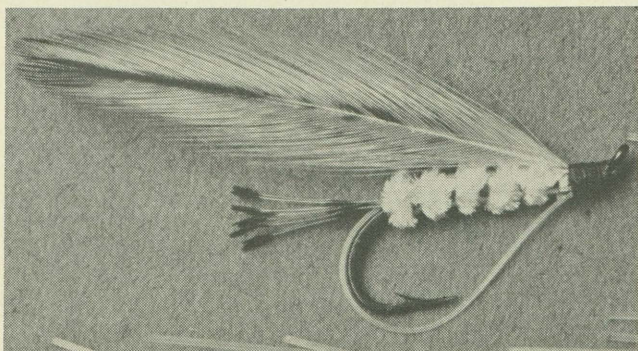
Poor knots are stupid. They happen most frequently when fishing has been slow and you've really lost faith anyhow.

LOTS OF THINGS have been used to make weedless hooks. For something fairly large, when weight is unimportant, wire guards are pretty standard. For very light hooks as used on small flies and bugs, or for very delicate natural bait, it isn't so simple.

The Landmark Tackle Company, Ltd., Box 17, Fullerton, Calif., 92632, has applied for a patent on a system of building a weedless fly with a loop of monofilament. The loop begins near the hook eye, is formed around the bend of hook and then the other end is tied into the shank of the hook.

The Landmark people sell both the flies tied up with the system which they call Brush Off and the strips of monofilament in different sizes to make your own.

It's a wonderful idea and deserves to make money
(Continued on next page)



A filament loop serves as an efficient weedguard on this fly produced by Landmark Tackle Company. The firm sells filaments in packages for various hook sizes so angler can tie his own.

(Continued from preceding page)

for the people who originated it. I suspect that a lot of home fly tyers will swipe the idea themselves, digging up substitute monofilament of their own without a by-your-leave from the people who had the idea. Patent regulations will probably stymie commercial use by unauthorized people. It takes stiff filament and the Landmark people say ordinary mono won't work properly.

I have some samples of the clever work done by Landmark but all of their flies are rather small and I wanted to see what would happen on really big stuff. We tried to stick the weedless loops on already completed bass bugs and it didn't work; couldn't make the loop the right size without beginning with construction of the bait.

Then we tried the loop on really huge feather streamers and hair frogs, starting from scratch, and it worked perfectly but my fly tying department reports there is some care involved in making the loops just right and putting them on so they'll protect the point of the hook instead of standing out to one side. All of the Landmark samples are right on the beam.

You can order the monofilament used by Landmark in making Brush Off at a dollar a package, already cut in sections for fly use. The mono comes in various sizes for different size hooks so you'd better write for a list before ordering. I think it works fine for any light fishing in weeds. It's also intended to prevent hangups on the bottom when fishing deep. I haven't heard of plastic worm applications.

ANY FISHERMAN can sharpen up by a little backyard casting practice and generally finds he isn't nearly as good as he thought he was.

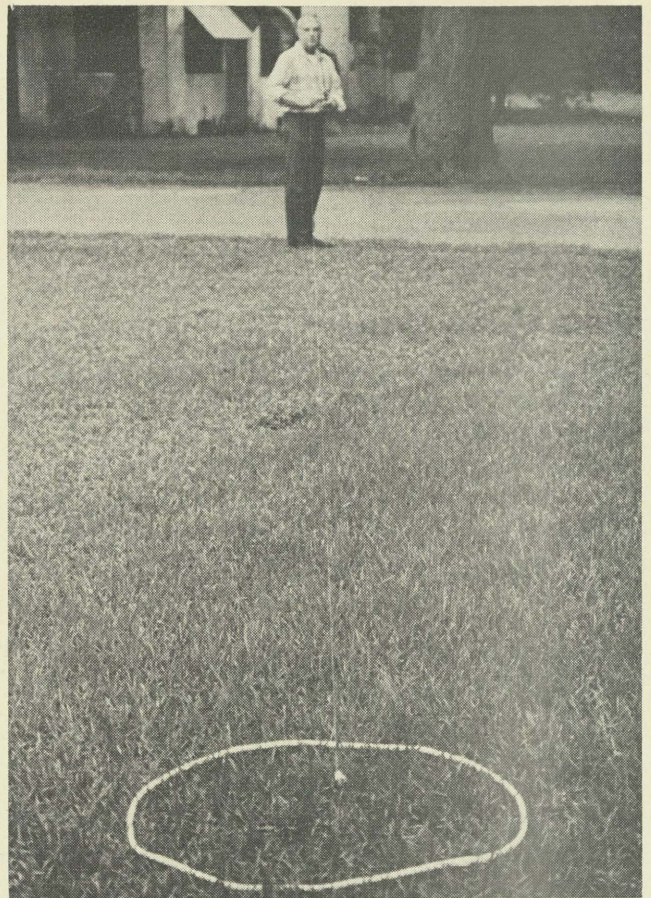
Standard casting tournament rings are 30 inches in diameter. At one time I made up a set from hula hoops but they were in the way and found their way to the city dump. Official rings might be a little expensive and would be even bulkier.

As an inexpensive substitute, good enough for lawn practice, some loops made from white polyethylene rope do very well and don't take up much room. You can just spread the loops on the ground and then scoop them up in one hand when you're through.

For a quick workout if you aren't that eager or just want to make a few throws with a practice plug, a metal garbage can lid is almost a perfect target, giving off satisfying bongs when hit.

Lawn practice will quickly show you the bad habits of your casting, even if you don't want to go for the tournament game.

And in case you're interested (no one seems to be) the competitive casting game isn't doing too



It isn't official, but simple rope loop makes a satisfactory casting target for lawn use and takes up little storage room.

well these days. Competition has dwindled until the faithful few are making every effort to recruit new casters.

They have an excellent organization and publish their own newssheet, *The Creel*. They're willing to do almost anything to get more of the public interested. At one time they even put slips in with new reels giving their address and suggesting that new fishermen (or old ones for that matter) contact them for casting information. The result was—nothing.

They argue constantly among themselves about what is the matter with their game. They have scheduled events that can be won with off-the-shelf fishing equipment but that doesn't work. They have threatened to cancel the impractical casting games in favor of real "fishing" games such as skish, which once enjoyed brief popularity.

It boils down to the fact that anyone who is willing to spend a lot of time at casting wants to work with special equipment, the same as a target rifleman wants to use a gun he wouldn't carry into the woods for game. Specialized tools are a major part of competitive casting.

I hate to see the game folding up. No one seems to care who wins the national championship—or the world championship for that matter—and except

for a few well-publicized professionals, casting champs have no trouble with autograph seekers. But I have no legitimate gripe as I've never done anything for competitive casting. About my only contact is to ask information as to how I can improve my own fishing and then I go my way without so much as paying dues.

Much of the present day fishing equipment owes its development to competitive casting. Of course it's like auto racing—you can't put your finger on the exact spot where competition helps and where it doesn't, but I know of several innovations that were direct results of casting competition.

I guess nobody wants to watch somebody throw something with no hooks. Kind of funny though when the sport pages are filled with photos of golfers making faces.

AN INTERESTING PLUG is produced by Captain Jim Strader, Inc., 7976 W. 20th Avenue, Hialeah. Called the Diamond Eye Rattler, it's part of a new line of "Diamond Eye" lures, and the eye has gleaming facets like a real rock.

This one is plastic, hollow and contains some pellets which roll around inside making a seductive rattle when the bait is twitched. When at rest the plug floats fairly level and it has smooth working spinners fore and aft.

There's been a lot of talk about noise aiding in black bass attraction. Some of the most touted noisemaking lures don't really make any more noise than those whose manufacturers haven't used that sales gimmick but this one definitely has sound effects. I predict that it will be a good one since it employs standard fish-catching design plus the noise-maker and the diamond eye.

Some years back the "Rattlelure" was a pet of mine. It tipped up and down with a spinner on the

stern. The rattle came from a larger pellet than that of the Diamond Eye Rattler. It's sound was more of a "clunk-clunk" instead of the "slither-click" noise put out by Strader's bait. Don't know what became of the Rattlelure design but I haven't heard of it lately.

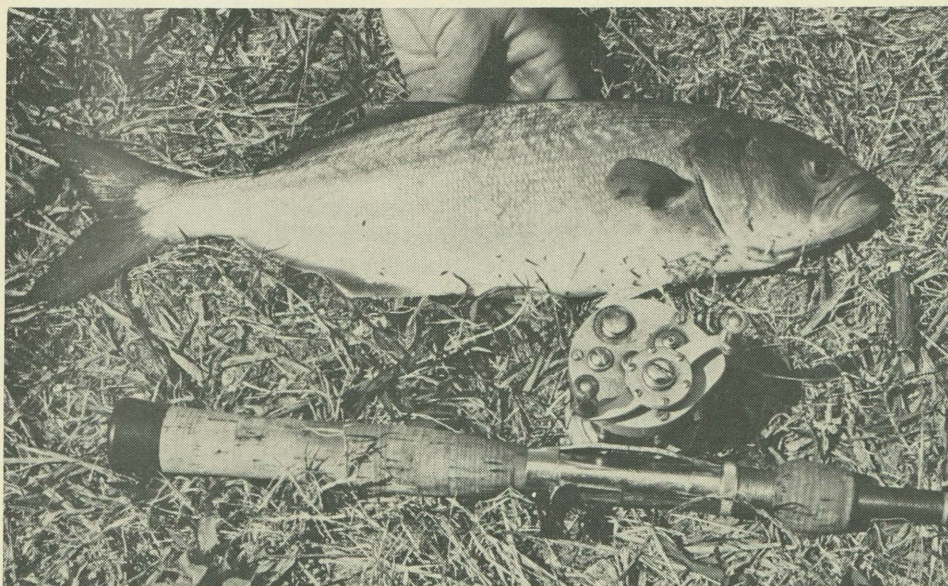
I'm ashamed that I haven't tested this new one thoroughly before writing about it but I had some weather problems just as I received it and my trial was sketchy.

OF ALL THE TOOTHY fish that can mangle fingers when someone gets careless, very few actually nip at you once they're in a boat or on a dock. There's lots of snapping but many veterans say that only the bluefish of all the game fish along our coasts actually makes an effort to masticate you after he's out of the water. I guess some kinds of sharks may do so.

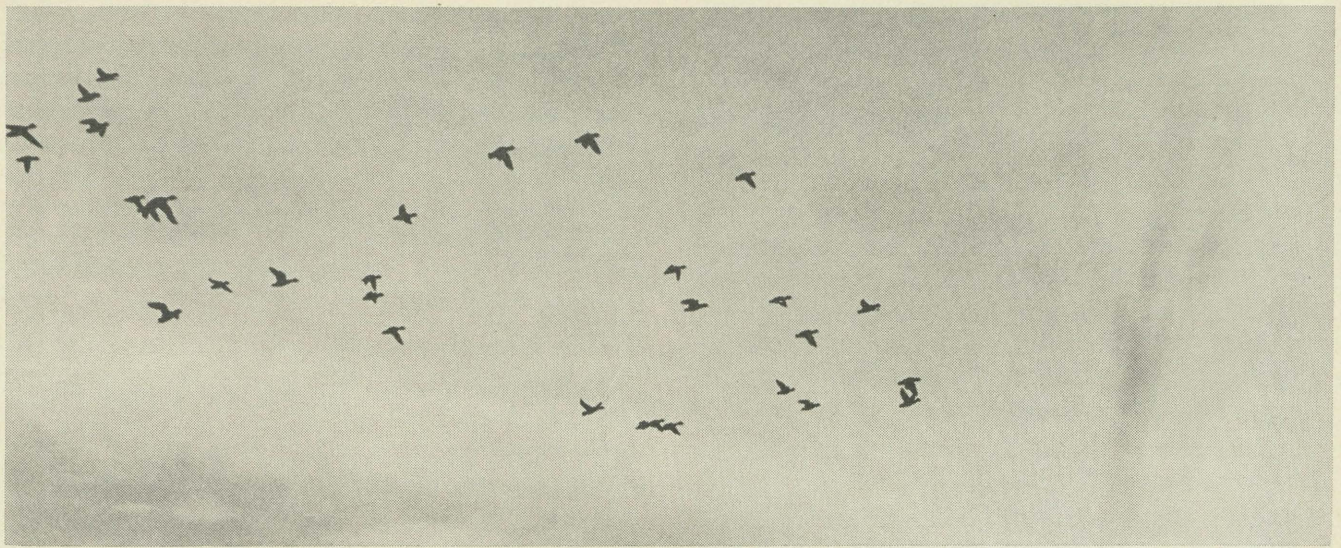
I am not so sure about the mangrove snapper. I do know that he's apt to take a death grip on anything that ends up between his jaws and I broke into ribald laughter when my wife somehow got a finger in the nippers of a 10-incher last summer. It bled a little but was nothing serious and a grown woman with long years of fishing experience dancing around with her finger in a snapper was a little funny.

Now whether a snapper would actually snap at sight of something moving near him I don't know.

I like the true story of an acquaintance who was catching bluefish from a small boat and stuffing them headfirst under a seat, alive and kicking, so they wouldn't be dangerous on the deck. He was getting one at every cast but a wave broke over the gunwale and sloshed a dozen lively big blues around his ankles in six inches of water until he climbed on the seat for first aid. ●



The bluefish, one of the few gamefish that will deliberately make effort at biting a fisherman after landed.



A Guessing Game

with some areas having changed water and feeding conditions—since last year—the waterfowler may have to seek different hunting locations

THIS YEAR'S Florida waterfowl hunting may well include the usual fascinating skies and rosy dawns, but the outlook for a day's luck may not always be as bright.

Ducks—as usual—migrated down the Atlantic coast flyway, with stop-overs in Florida, but reports from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service say that some duck populations are down. Mallards are 4% below 1967 population figure, pintails 12% and blue-winged teal 29%.

This year—probably more assiduously than in recent years—hunters must first find the ducks to shoot. If you're late in scouting good hunting spots, your best bet is to go directly to an area where you found ducks last season and work out in all directions from there. If the ducks were there last season, and if water and feeding conditions have not changed, in all probabilities the migrant ducks have made much the same stops this year.

Probably more than any other hunting sport, waterfowl hunting requires specialized equipment. Successful shooting is tied in with the right gun. The gun, therefore, is first item of consideration. For good reason, it should be 12 gauge, barrel bored full choke or no more open than modified.

At forty yards a 12 gauge, full choke bored shotgun barrel will deliver a killing pattern close to 3 feet in diameter. A modified choke barrel boring at the same distance will average about 41 inches, pattern-size. Pellet striking energy (for the same size shot and powder loading) is only slightly less than

that of full choke. A complex chronograph testing machine is needed to establish the slight difference.

If a light 20 gauge is used—with its resulting smaller shot charge—a full choke barrel boring should always be chosen, if the 20 gauge is to be effectively used on waterfowl.

Simple and dependable is the double barrel. It not only seldom gives any mechanical trouble, but is fast to reload. It is also easier to keep clean than other types of gun actions.

In a double or over-and-under intended for waterfowling, seriously consider having the first fired barrel modified or improved modified choke boring, and the second barrel bored full choke. When you fire only the first barrel, make it a practice to reload that chamber immediately. You'd be surprised to know how often incoming targets catch hunters with either unloaded or only partially loaded gun.

An autoloader offers the advantage of three fast, successive shots, but often the least bit of sand or shell case scuff will cause it to jam or otherwise fail—usually when you most want it to perform.

The pump-action is another fast gun for the waterfowler. It is more dependable of mechanical operation than an autoloader and usually balances better in the hands.

But the manual working of the pump's slide-action for a follow-up shot, combined with recoil, tends to momentarily throw most waterfowlers off target. Only those shooters who are masters of the pump-

action do the best work with it on fast succeeding shots.

Both autoloaders and pumps, as well as over-and-unders, give a single sighting plane that is more accurate and a bit faster pointing than twin barrels of a side-by-side double.

It is axiomatic that the longer the sighting radius, the more accurately a shotgun or rifle barrel can be aligned, and the less it will be susceptible to even slight changes in sighting plane.

For this reason, the pass shooter, who makes most of his shots at longer average ranges than does the waterfowler who shoots over close-set decoys, generally uses a long barreled shotgun giving long sighting radius and more accurate pointing of muzzle in relation to target. Whereas the close-to-game hunter might make considerable aiming error and still encompass his target in killing pattern, the same margin of inaccuracy on the part of the pass shooter might easily result in a clean miss.

For pass shooting, mostly done at ranges between 45 and 55 yards, a full choked 12 gauge is to be preferred.

Usually, 12 gauge pumps and autoloaders used for serious waterfowl pass shooting have 28 to 30 inch length barrels. Magnum double guns, with their heavier, longer burning powder charges, are generally 30 to 32 inches in barrel length.

Striking energy and pattern density of a released shot charge are especially important to the waterfowler. Most ducks are heavily feathered; shot must

penetrate to vitals, preferably in multiple number.

Keep in mind that large shot hold their velocity better and, therefore, travel farther and penetrate better than small shot at longer ranges.

Under average conditions No. 6 shot will prove the most dependable performer on ducks shot over decoys. More distant ducks, and geese, need larger shot.

But don't discount the potential killing power of a charge of small shot at close ranges! A standard 12 gauge trap load, filled with No. 7½ shot, will prove surprisingly deadly on stooling ducks under 40 yards, either firing low-angle over decoys or jump shooting after slow, cautious stalk within close shooting range. The vital advantage, under described conditions, is increased shot pattern density.

Small size shot are also good for finishing off downed cripples.

It is a good idea to divide a box of shotshells into piles of five each, and packet each portion in a soft, noiseless plastic bag tied at open end. You can then quickly tear open a bag when you need ammunition. Unused shotshells remain protected. The division is much better than keeping all 25 shells in a single, easily spilled box.

Another good idea is to put shotshells in a leather shell belt, from which individual shotshells can be instantly extracted. The belt need not be worn.

Binoculars are very useful in scanning skies for
(Continued on next page)

By EDMUND McLAURIN

Single bird or full bag, the waterfowler's day is invariably one of enchantment plus cherished memories. This is a season when hunters may have to search more for ducks.



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approaching waterfowl, but they must be used with care, so that sunlight does not strike the exit lenses and create reflection flashes that can be seen a long way off by a sharp-eyed bird.

They are a great aid in positively identifying ducks seen on the water, after a far-away landing, or surprise encounter following a slow, silent approach to a lake or pond.

Those of 7 x 35 designation give large and steady fields of view when hand-held.

Clothing, of course, should blend with the coloration of the blind or surrounding vegetation. The basic items should be worn in layers, to be shed or added to as the weather dictates.

A rubberized, camouflage design parka is one of the most useful garments that you can take waterfowl hunting. Match it to wool pants, shirt and sweater and you have a good cold, wet weather combination.

A waterproof parka is far more practical than a slicker or conventional raincoat, either of which will invariably fit too tightly and also prove hot to wear.

If only thin, outside camouflage garment is needed, wear a Kamo *net* parka, large enough in size to give loose fit over other clothing.

Wear wool socks on feet and wool gloves on hands. Gloves contribute to sureness of gun hold and control. Socks help keep body blood warm and circulating. Wool always provides some warmth—even when wet.

A dull green color or camouflage pattern cap with eyeshade brim is an ideal headpiece if the

recommended parka does not have its own head-covering hood. Next best is a drab color wool knit cap.

Where they are preferred choice, hip boots should be supported by a shoulder harness that the hunter can get out of easily and quickly should he suddenly find himself submerged in icy water.

One can get awfully cold and stiff during long, idle occupancy of a duck blind on a cold, windy day. To keep warm, a Coleman catalytic heater is recommended, Pocket-size Jone-e Warmers help to keep hands warm and supple.

The duck call is best left at home if the hunter is not proficient in naturally duplicating common duck talk. Under such circumstances it is better to rely on a good decoy set—and Lady Luck—than possibly keep birds away by meaningless and raucous sound. On the other hand, a call, expertly used, is an important ingredient of successful duck hunting.

A good dog adds much pleasure to hunts. The merits of the various breeds are argued wherever waterfowlers gather. Much, of course, depends on the temperament of the individual dog and his training, but the Golden retriever, Labrador, Chesapeake, Springer and Weimaraner breeds are used with great success.

Invariably, you will recover more birds downed if you have a dog to promptly send after them.

Spacious, comfortable, well-camouflaged permanent blinds are fine—if birds continue to come within gun range. After considerable shooting, flocks and singles learn to by-pass known danger points. Under such circumstances, the most expensive pain-



stakingly-built blind will prove valueless—except as a bird watching point.

Probably the best blinds are the small, portable, easily set-up types. One type can be made by weaving natural vegetation in large mesh, flexible poultry wire that can be compactly rolled and transported. Prepared stakes or rods are used to make land set-up with aid of supplementary green nylon parachute cord ties.

Where a boat is used for shooting out in open water, a natural camouflage can be given the entire boat and idle motor by using prepared frames covered with chicken wire and camouflaged vegetation common to the area.

It may take a little advance planning and experimenting to work out the best and most conveniently assembled blind components, but it can be done. The results are often worth the effort, as boat and portable blind can be moved as hunting conditions change.

Some hunters build a raft-like blind, which they tow behind boat to scene of planned shooting. They

then cover the anchored boat and motor with camouflage netting and native grass, and occupy the anchored raft-blind, connected to the boat by a length of submerged rope.

A set of old style, solid wood decoys—as in the hey-day of their popularity—are a burden to transport, because of being bulky and heavy.

Not so some of the new, inflatable rubber or plastic decoys! You can stuff a dozen uninflated versions in hunting coat pocket. Their disadvantage is that they aren't as durable as the old, solid wood decoys. Most certainly, they won't withstand shotgun blasts directed at birds resting among them.

"Confidence" decoys—decoy figures of seagull, tern or sleeping goose—are good additions to a decoy set. Their presence helps allay last second suspicions of flyers cautiously approaching a set.

Whatever the material of decoys you use, don't make the mistake of using white or a bright color anchor line ties. The conspicuous lines will be dead give-away to wary waterfowl! Instead, use green nylon parachute cord or drab color fishing line. Usually, large diameter anchor-tie cord is easier to use and keep untangled than fishing line.

When you first sight incoming birds, **DON'T MOVE!** Caution your shooting blind partner—if you are sharing a blind—to "freeze," too. A *sudden* movement, especially of white, upturned face, is quickly spotted by sharp-eyed approaching waterfowl. Black ducks are especially alert and suspicious.

The least unnaturalness about a decoy set, a reflection from empty shotshell case head lying outside the blind, or hunter movement within a blind, will likely be quickly detected and the vicinity avoided. That's why it pays to periodically check blind and decoy set for correctness. This can be done on the way back from retrieving a kill, or when there are no birds around to see you making inspection.

A waterfowl hunting tip that puts game in the bag is to "wait out" approaching birds, making certain that they are within effective gun range before blasting away at them. Missed birds will nearly always be beyond 40 yards; those that come within that range are quite apt to be killed cleanly by any waterfowler of average skill.

As a target, a duck is most vulnerable to gunfire when it comes in as a low-angle crossing target, within 40 yards of the gun. The body outline as seen by the gunner and exposed to his shot charge then includes vital areas in which hits will invariably result in a kill.

By the species responding to decoy sets, the experienced hunter knows what to expect when birds are startled into flush and take-off.

The shallow water feeders—the mallard, black duck, pintail, teal, gadwall, wood duck and baldpate

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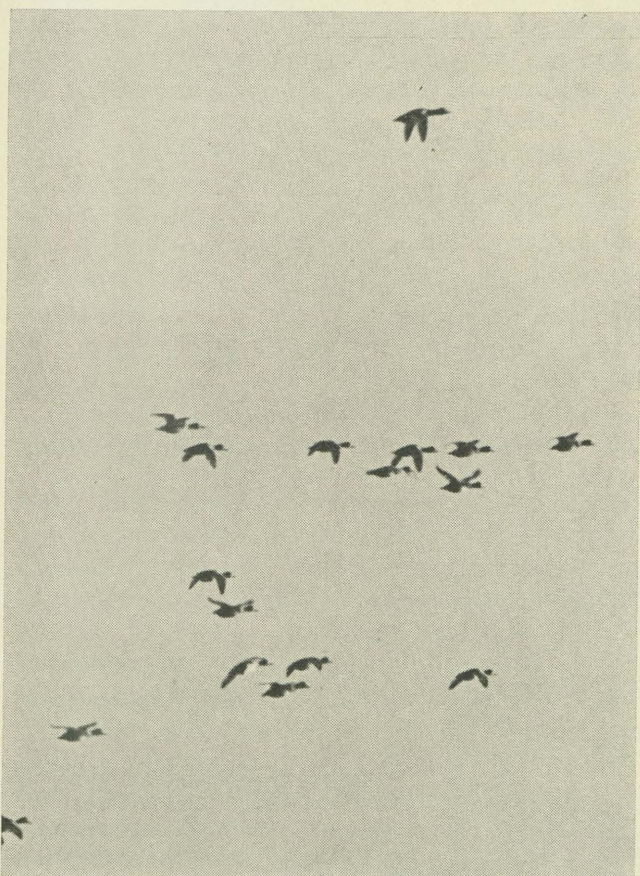


Photo By Wallace Hughes

On some days ducks will unexplainably decoy in even if both hunter and boat are practically unconcealed. You never know! As targets, ducks are most vulnerable to shots when they can come in as low-angle crossing targets, within 40 yard range.

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—usually spring up vertically from the water for several feet before making horizontal get-away flight.

The divers and open bay, deep water birds generally patter along the surface of the water for some distance before becoming air-borne.

As in dove hunting, there is a lot of missing when shooting at waterfowl! The sure way to learn to shoot ducks is to shoot ducks. It is difficult to become a good duck shot without supplementary, actual shooting.

Even so, a look-see analysis of some typical field shots, attendant problems, required muzzle pointing and lead often proves helpful to a beginner or an admittedly poor wingshot.

For better understanding of some of the described angle shots, get a half-circle protractor and note on paper the different angles of possible bird flight in relation to horizontal.

For practical purposes, take the protractor's 90 degree marking as a truly vertical plane—which it is—and compute angles left or right from it. Consider the horizontal plane left of the 90 degree vertical as “zero,” and a continuation of that same horizontal plane right of 90 degrees as “180 degrees”—which figures will be reflected by the half-circle protractor itself, marked from zero to 180 degrees by successively higher scale numerals.

Let's say you have successfully brought to stool one or more of the shallow water feeders, and a selected, flushed target makes characteristic straight up jump into flight. This represents a close, rising, almost vertical target. Clobber your bird by holding high as he still rises and before he starts forward flight. It is a 90 degree vertical, above bird lead.

Now, let's assume a target has been flushed from the decoys and is fast going away, either directly or at a very slight angle. This type of shot calls for the

shotgunner to hold *under* target, so that released shot charge intercepts the departing bird; it also calls for some side allowance if the bird is angling at 70 degrees (left) or 110 degrees (right).

When a bird decides to land just outside the decoy set, it will usually start to flare from course. The actual distance from gun usually proves deceptive. Give plenty of lead, with gun muzzle pointed a bit higher than bird, about 80 degrees (left) or 100 degrees (right), depending on the target's left or right course.

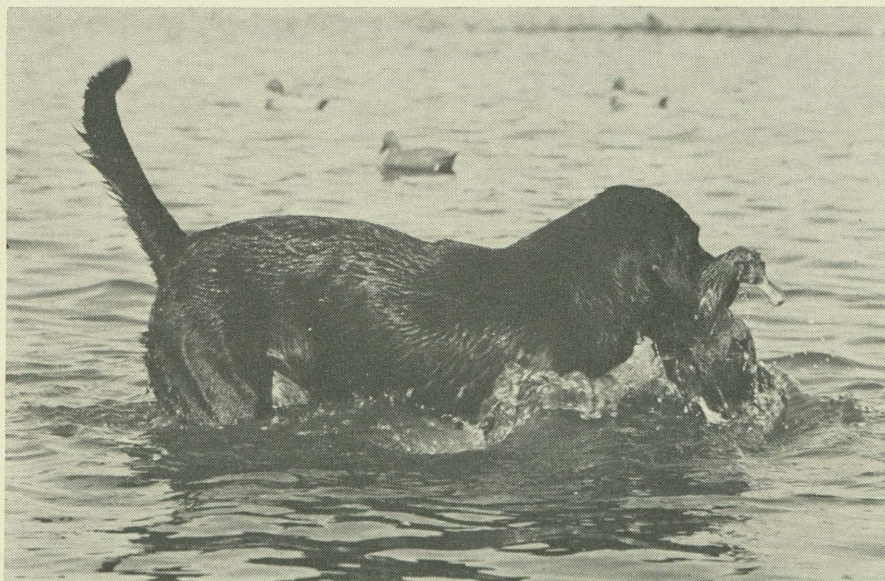
Bird is in full flight on a straight course, either “zero” left or right 180 degrees protractor angle, crossing directly ahead. You should swing muzzle on bird from behind him, and pull the trigger as you pass, maintaining gun swing, for a smooth follow-through.

Target right on you? Withhold your fire until it is again sufficiently far from gun that the shot charge won't blast the bird to pieces. Usually, the required lead will be slight—and accurate, since you will have had time for good gun pointing judgment.

Cripple on the water and trying to rise? For this common type of shot, see a bit of daylight between gun muzzle and the crippled bird's head as it tries to rise from the water. This normally requires a lead at approximately 85 degrees or 95 degrees (5 degrees left or 5 degrees right of 90 degree vertical) depending on attempted flight direction.

When you hit—or miss—try to visualize just where your gun muzzle was pointing in relation to target as you pulled the trigger, and ponder the factors that led to hitting or missing. Gradually you will develop skill. Once a certain experience stage is reached, it will likely advance rapidly and pleasurably.

At best, Florida waterfowl hunting this year is a guessing game. Even so, you can win, by guessing right. ●



Retrievers add considerable pleasure to the sport of waterfowl hunting, and will also save many of the downed birds that would otherwise be a loss to the hunter.

The Opossum

By GENE SMITH

DON'T PITY the 'possum. It doesn't need it. If there is an animal in North America that has demonstrated more convincingly its ability to fend for itself, we can't think of it. Usually tossed off as a sluggish, stupid fellow, the evidence shows it to be one of the most adaptable mammals in existence—one that has been around, practically unchanged, for something like 100 million years!

Didelphis marsupialis, the familiar old gray-haired 'possum, is this country's sole representative of the ancient order of pouched mammals (marsupials) that includes the kangaroos. He is the size of a house cat; is mostly a night wanderer; eats practically anything; lives both in city and country; is hunted for sport, food and pelt; and has given Americans the phrase "playing 'possum," which denotes a "feinting" spell, a sullen, grinning, lifeless-looking defense posture of his, said by some scientists to be involuntary . . . a state of shock.

But as long as man and opossum have coexisted, the basic facts concerning its life history have somehow evaded the general public. In fact, some gross misconceptions have become widely accepted—the most outlandish being the old tale that opossums breed through the nose (also heard about raccoons occasionally). Another erroneous belief is that baby opossums are conceived in the mother's pouch and grow there like peas in a pod.

The facts are that opossums (and raccoons) copulate just like other mammals and give live birth to their young, after which the baby opossums crawl into the *marsupium*, or pouch. They are born after a gestation period of only 12 or 13 days. From eight to twenty embryonic young are produced in a litter, each weighing about $\frac{1}{15}$ -ounce and being the size of a bumblebee. The tiny grub-looking 'possums are helpless except that with their fairly well-developed front paws they instinctively "swim" through the mother's belly fur from the birth canal to the pouch. Here they will be protected for another 60-70 days—at least most of them.

There is a built-in control over the 'possum population. Inside the mother's pouch there are only 13 mammarys . . . available for one-time use only on a first come-first served basis. Each of the first 13 arrivals attaches itself firmly to a teat for the duration of its continued development. The remainder lose what was for them a veritable race for life itself.

From six to nine of the 13 faucet-finders may



Photo By Wallace Hughes

Caught in the open a 'possum is apparently helpless, lacking great speed and a fighting spirit. But they know one trick all their own—"playing 'possum." They can swim well but do not appear to enjoy it; preferring to climb to evade enemies.

survive to adulthood—sometimes less. The others are lost through natural predation and mortality as they become old enough to be out of pocket, clinging to the mother's fur as she rambles about the countryside.

There are some genuine oddities about the opossum's anatomy—aside from the well-known pouch of the female. For example, the reproductive organs of both sexes are dual, the male's being forked and the female's divided into two canals just inside the outer opening. And, of course, there is the very handy *prehensile* tail, with which the opossum can hang from a limb or help support himself while climbing about a tree feeding. Too, he has *opposable* thumbs—on his hind feet—which enable him to grasp an object by encircling it, just as man and monkey are able to do.

Yes, the opossum is well equipped for survival. In fact, he has increased his natural range northward in the past 60 years, now being found from southern New England and the lower Great Lakes region clear to the Gulf and westward to northeast Texas, Oklahoma and Kansas. And he has been successfully introduced west of the Rockies.

So don't pity the 'possum. Just help squelch those ridiculous stories about him! ●



CAMERA HUNTING for DEER

provides photographic trophies
and enables the hunter to
learn about wild game habits



ALMOST TWO YEARS passed before I managed to get a trophy-sized whitetail buck in front of my camera. The two years were filled with preparation, trial and error, and frustration. Because of the time and effort involved, the act of taking the photograph seemed anticlimactic. However, the photographs of the buck were the primary reason for all of the effort, and I felt a great sense of satisfaction when the pictures were developed and printed.

Deer photography offers some definite advantages for the person interested in deer hunting. For example, hunting deer with a camera is not limited to a definite season of the year, but can be enjoyed anytime. So you can choose to pursue deer when

the woods are not crowded with other hunters as well as any time that is convenient for you.

Deer photography can also teach one a great deal about the habits of deer and how to hunt them. These two facts plus the prospect of making some pleasing photographs of deer make deer photography an interesting and satisfying pursuit, and an excellent addition to the normal hunting season. This is why I decided to try deer photography while assigned to Eglin Air Force Base.

As deer hunters know, the deer is a very wary animal. This is one reason why camera hunting for deer is so challenging and the basis for one of the primary problems that is encountered. Simply

stated, the problem is to get the deer in front of the camera.

One way to accomplish this is to ride through clearings in good deer cover in an automobile. Deer are relatively unafraid of automobiles and will often stand and stare while you stop to take their picture. As with other types of deer hunting, the chances for seeing deer are better in the early morning or late evening. This is a good way to begin camera hunting because it is an easy way to find deer and allows one the opportunity to learn how to use a camera along with the essentials of photography such as film choice, developing, and which equipment is really needed. However, it is practically impossible to get really close to the deer and very soon your photographs begin to take on a sameness in appearance.

Another approach is to walk through the woods with a camera and watch for deer as you proceed. The idea is to see the deer first and to start stalking it and taking photographs as you proceed. Again, the best times are early morning or late evening.

This is a very enjoyable and challenging past-

time. However, the alertness and shyness of deer make it a very difficult technique for deer photography. In addition to the wariness of the deer, the foregrounds and backgrounds will most likely be troublesome. One of the more frequent and irritating faults in wildlife photographs is the presence of out-of-focus objects between the camera and the subject. There always seems to be a bush or tree limb between the camera and the deer. What makes the situation even worse is the fact that your eye tends to ignore these objects while concentrating on the deer. Also, the background behind the deer may not produce a pleasing photograph. All of these factors combine to result in few opportunities for good deer pictures while walking in the woods. Fortunately, there is a technique which, if used properly, will result in many good opportunities—the blind.

The concealment offered by the blind reduces the effect of the deer's wariness. Also, it allows the control of foregrounds and backgrounds by proper selection of the blind site and influencing the move-

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A white-tailed buck deer, above left, becomes a trophy on film through the 200mm telephoto lens that is attached to 35mm camera. Brought closer in by the extra power of a 300mm telephoto lens, a fine doe, left, poses nicely for photographer. Two alert does, at right, pause for 200mm telephoto lens picture taken at the edge of a clearing. A hunter can profit by taking up deer hunting with his camera—a great deal can be learned about the deer habits.

Photo Story
By WILLIAM EVANS





All Photos By William Evans

Pleasing deer photos need not be confined to the wilds. A semi-tame doe, above, a Boy Scout Camp pet, "poses for portrait"—a 50mm lens on 35mm camera was used. A trophy size buck, right, eyes the camera from a food strip planted for deer at Eglin AFB, in northwest Florida. The photo was made from tree blind using 200mm telephoto lens.



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ment of deer near the blind (the latter will be discussed later).

There are two places to build blinds—either on the ground or off the ground in the trees. I decided to try the tree blinds because they are preferred by the archery hunters at Eglin. I discovered for myself why they favor tree blinds—deer don't look up! They are extremely wary of movement and noise on the ground but will often ignore the same noise and movement overhead in a tree. This does not mean that you cannot frighten deer from a tree blind, just that the chances of frightening them are greatly reduced.

The next problem is the location of the blind. We will assume that a suitable area has been chosen by scouting. After selecting an area, you must become familiar with all of the deer trails, the bedding areas, and feeding grounds. This is very important because a considerable amount of effort and time is involved in making the blind. If the blind is not located properly to begin with, valuable time is wasted. Select a blind site only after becoming completely familiar with the area.

Choose a site which will provide good foregrounds and backgrounds for photographs. Objects between

the blind and the places where the deer will stand should be noticed. For best results either remove the offending objects or change the blind site. No rules can be written on what background will yield the best photographs. Look at the background for presence of undesirable objects like telephone poles, most fences, roads, etc. If something looks undesirable, change the blind site.

Also choose a blind site which will put deer in front of the camera most often. This is done by studying the trails—particularly the trails going to feeding areas. Excellent examples of feeding areas are the strips of winter rye grass which are planted in the fall at Eglin to supplement the deer's winter food supply. Deer come to these areas from considerable distances and the trails leading to them are well used. Choose a heavily traveled trail going into such an area for your blind. It is desirable to locate a blind down the trail from a point where two trails have joined. More trails leading into the trail adjacent to the blind mean more deer passing the blind. My best blind was located about 100 yards into the woods from a food strip on a trail junction.

Even with the best of blind locations it may still be difficult to get good photographs because of the way the deer move past the blind. They may go

too fast, stop at the wrong place, or follow the wrong route past the blind. For best results, the deer's movement past the blind must be predetermined. Baiting helps here!

Corn proved to be successful after salt blocks were tried. For some reason the deer at Eglin were just not interested in salt blocks. So that the deer will expect corn to be at the blind, bait it periodically for two or three weeks prior to using it. When using the blind, place piles of corn where it is desired that the deer stop for photographs. You can determine the deer's orientation (that is broadside, front, etc.) with respect to the blind by proper routing of the trails of corn leading to the piles. Also, you increase your chances of seeing deer by putting out trails of corn from the blind in likely directions. Deer intercepting one of these trails will start eating the corn and follow it to the blind.

Let us summarize briefly. A blind is the best approach for getting close enough to deer for good photographs. It offers concealment and can be located for a desirable foreground and background. The blind will work even better if bait is used to influence the deer's movement near the blind. However, there is another important factor which has a direct influence on your success in putting deer in front of the camera—the time of year that you choose for taking pictures. Obviously deer photography will be least successful during hunting season.

Even when taking photographs from a blind, the deer are seldom close enough for good results with the standard lens of a camera. A telephoto lens of some sort is necessary. Because it is more convenient to use a long telephoto lens with a single-lens reflex camera, it is the best type of camera for deer photography. I presently use a Nikon F, loaded with a slow or medium speed film, and the 300 mm Nikkor lens. Slow or medium speed film is used for sharper and less grainy pictures.

Since the telephoto lens magnifies camera move-

ment along with the image size, something is needed to hold the camera steady for sharp pictures. Because of the rapidity of deer movement, a tripod is not suitable. I built and use a gunstock mount for this purpose. The gunstock mounted camera permits a rapid alignment of the camera on the deer and makes it easier to keep up with a moving animal.

Hunting deer with a camera is a fascinating and challenging hobby. Once you master the technique, obtaining good photographs is not difficult. However, one should not get discouraged if initial efforts are disappointing. Remember that two activities are involved—the hunting of the animal and the use of photographic equipment. Master both of these skills and you will find a great deal of satisfaction and enjoyment in deer photography. So load up your camera and good luck! ●



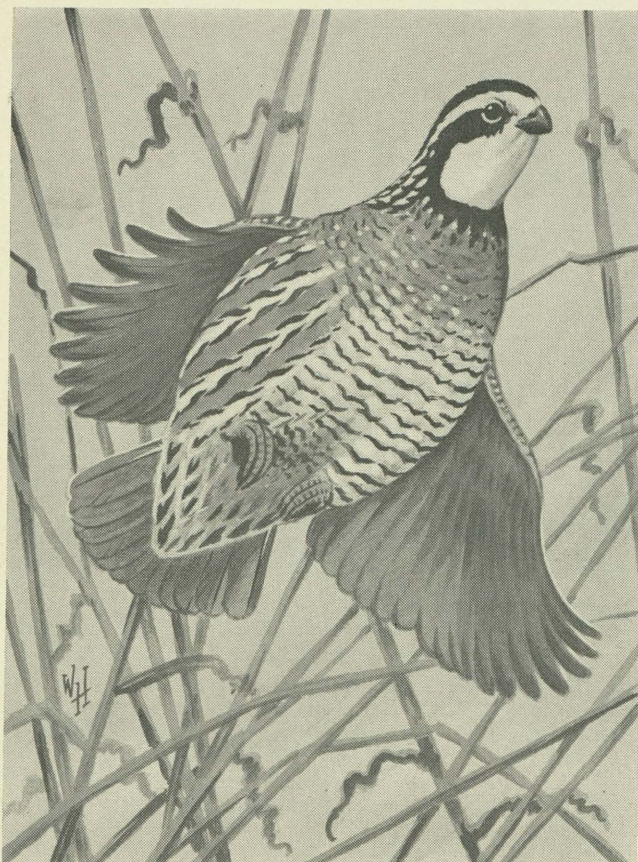
Young deer make appealing photo subjects. An example is the 2½ month old fawn, left. The photographer of deer cannot be choosy when it comes to backgrounds and prevailing lighting conditions—he has to take what he gets, and hope that his subject stands out to best advantage. Photo of a doe in the woods, above, was made from a ground blind with 300mm lens.





a perennial favorite, the bobwhite tends to run for cover but the natural instinct is to hold, or "freeze" under point—when flushed they present a most challenging target

QUAIL . . . The Big Little Bird



SUPPOSE WE COULD HAVE only one game bird in Florida and it had to be selected by popular vote. If you think the bobwhite quail would be "it" we'll agree with you. No other candidate, native or foreign, is more deserving of the top spot than the quail, the big little bird that has everything a game bird is supposed to have—and then some.

The wingshooter would surely vote for it. He likes the bobwhite's abundance and easy availability to the average fellow, its challenging speed on the wing, its inborn tendency to hold under point, its ability to provide an extended hunting season and the fact that a covey doesn't leave the county when flushed. Singles can be hunted on the next hillside, along the next fence row or in the next palmetto clump. And there is one other very nice feature: the quail's truly superior flavor. If there is any tastier, more succulent flesh on this continent, wild or domestic, it has yet to grace our table.

Another staunch supporter of the bobwhite as "game bird *uno numero*" is the wildlife biologist. From his knowledgeable viewpoint this native upland wildfowl, the subject of much, much patient study, is praiseworthy for its nesting persistence, which accounts for its good availability, its compatibility with people, especially rural people, and for

its well documented response to the simple game management practices of quail home improvement—providing cover for the bird's safety—and the encouraging of suitable seed-producing plants for them to eat, these two necessities being properly scattered around over the terrain. With these modest requirements satisfied, and a little room to roam, quail are almost sure to be produced season after season—on management area or farm; in national forest or hunting preserve.

Finally, nature lovers and bird watchers at large all enjoy the presence of quail over the Florida landscape. And the general public will stand and gaze at an enclosure of pen-raised birds in a Commission fair exhibit for hours.

They are, indeed, everybody's bird.

But the quail has its problems in parts of Florida. In the flatwoods and prairie country of the southern peninsula, for example, where high water levels in wet summers prevent successful hatching and brood rearing, the birds get scarce. In the broad expanses of cleared, tabletop-looking improved pastures there is neither food nor cover for quail—and they vanish. In the rolling citrus country of central and south Florida, where the manicured, antiseptic look is "in" and the rough, naturally weedy, undergrown look is "out," the birds have disappeared except around the edges and in a few people's yards, where they are fed and cared for much like chickens. This loss of birds over vast acreages is a pity, too, because, even though the unsolvable problem of fruit damage by birdshot precludes quail hunting in grove country, they'd be nice just to have around.

But in sections of the state where the concept of "clean" farming has not yet wrecked the quail's prospects for survival—where the landscape has not yet been disced and chopped clean as far as the eye can see, or paved for a new subdivision-shopping center complex—the bird hunter and his dogs are not usually long in finding game. It is not unusual in parts of Florida to find eight or ten coveys in a good day's hunt, although the average birdhunter admittedly has to settle for considerably less.

By GENE SMITH

There are few occasional hunters of quail. Most of those who have good bird dogs, and love the style and tradition of bird hunting, are slightly "mad" about their sport—and go every other day. Florida season is long but quail are still underharvested.

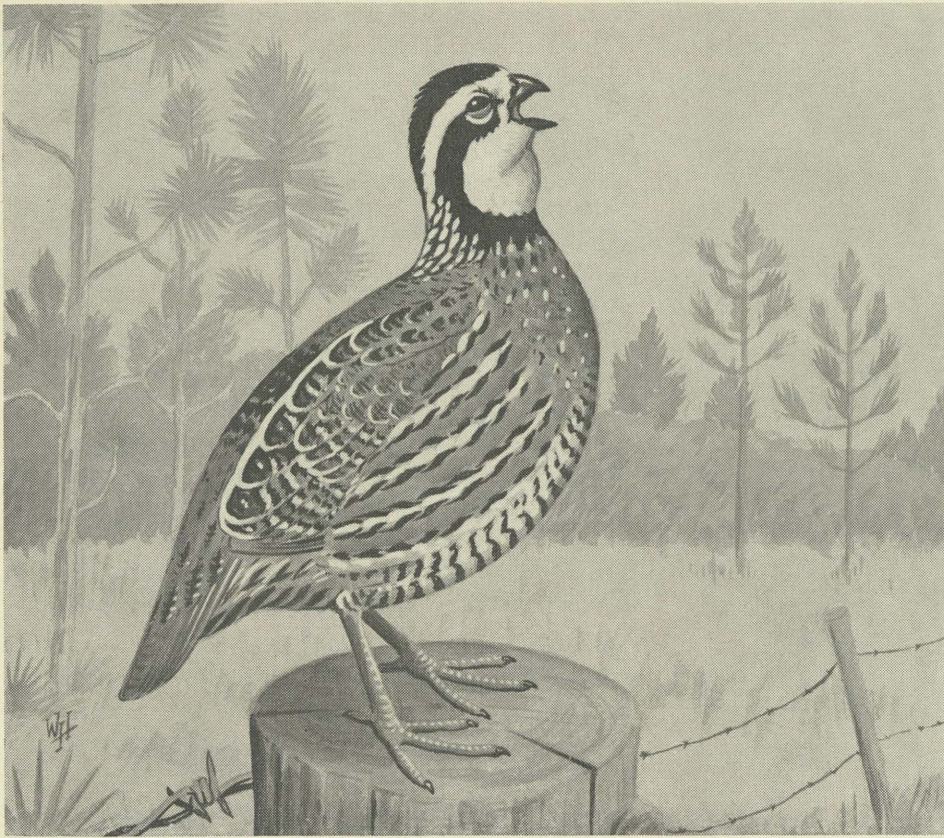
A prerequisite to sound management of any wildlife resource is having some knowledge of what is being harvested. Quail are no exception.

According to the latest available random mail survey of hunting and harvest in Florida (conducted after the 1966-67 season) a total of 82,500 quail hunters bagged nearly 2¼-million birds in over 600,000 man-days hunting effort. This represents a substantial contribution to the state's economy—in outlay for dog support, arms, ammunition, clothing, travel, food and other expenditures—not to mention the support of a program that conserves other forms of wildlife, both hunted and unhunted species, through hunting license and permit purchases. And when we tack on the fun and outdoor recreation those 600,000 days afforded, on which no dollars and cents values can be placed, the popularity of the bobwhite and the sport of hunting him should soar even higher among the populace.

Incidentally, the aforementioned random survey showed that the Northwest Florida Region had the most quail hunters with 20,700, followed closely by the South Florida Region with 20,000, Central Region with 16,700, Northeast with 15,400 and the Everglades with 9,700—all figures approximate, based on statistical projections from the post card mail questionnaire sample.

The effort, in *man-days*, spent on quail hunting
(Continued on next page)





The male quail is a lonely fellow if left a bachelor in the spring. His familiar "bobwhite" whistle is a loud plaintive plea for a mate, not a song of cheer because it is spring. A preponderance of cocks over hens, coupled with the quail's admirable habit of pairing off for the season makes the presence of numerous un-mated males inevitable.

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looked like this: South Florida led with 268,800, trailed by the Northwest with 129,500, Northeast with 88,200, Everglades with 85,400 and Central Region with 84,200 man-days.

Even more interesting, however, were the results, the *harvest* figures for each region. South Florida Region was well on top with a take of 944,000 birds, followed by the Northwest with 474,200, the Northeast with 311,200, Central with 304,700 and the Everglades Region with 204,600 birds.

(Note: The results of the 1968-69 mail survey are now being compiled. Increases in numbers of hunters, man-days and harvest will undoubtedly be reflected in the later report.)

Past studies of quail in Florida have shown that many coveys are never shot by hunters because they are never found—and that probably no more than 30% of the winter quail population is taken by hunters in west Florida; possibly 60% in the more open areas of south Florida. Both figures indicate underharvest when we note that about 80% of all birds will die from some natural cause in the first year of life, hunted or not.

There are two subspecies of quail in Florida. North of a line roughly from Cedar Key on the Gulf to St. Augustine on the Atlantic, the eastern bobwhite, *Colinus virginianus*, is found. South of the line the Florida bobwhite, *Colinus virginianus floridanus*, is the native subspecies. On both sides of

the line there is considerable intermixing of the two and overlapping of their ranges.

The adult eastern bobwhite weighs about six ounces while the Florida bobwhite averages about an ounce lighter. The only other noticeable difference in the two is the slightly darker coloration of the latter. For all practical purposes their behavior and life histories are the same.

Winter coveys break up gradually in the spring, the birds often wandering apart in pairs and trios to feed during the day and re-forming to roost as a covey. But as the mating urge increases—particularly evidenced by the bellicose males, who begin to engage each other in minor combat at every turn—pairing begins to occur.

Quail are monogamous, that is, they mate once for the entire breeding season. The pairs are inseparable as they gambol through the warming days for possibly a full month before nesting begins.

That clear, melodious sound of the calling "bobwhite" in the late spring is not a song of cheer. It is the call of forlorn male birds left unmated when the coveys broke up—the inevitable result of there being about 15% more cocks than hens in the typical winter covey. These cocks are committed to a bachelor's life. Some never give up hope, however, for they continue to whistle for a mate well into the summer.

Once a pair have decided to start their family they will let nothing less than death stand in their

way—and even though one parent is lost the other will assume full responsibility for rearing the brood.

If predators destroy a clutch of eggs—as cotton rats, skunks, some kinds of snakes and even fire ants often do—the determined pair will renest, again and again if necessary, until a brood is brought off successfully. This explains the occasional sighting of baby quail in late summer. There is no biological evidence that bobwhite produce more than one brood a year but they will go to extreme efforts to bring off that one if it takes all summer! Even one egg that hatches will satisfy the breeding urge and the pair will go about rearing their one chick as though it were a normal brood.

The normal clutch consists of about 14 eggs, which are laid in 15 to 20 days. Incubation, which begins shortly after all the eggs are laid, takes another 23 days and may or may not be shared by the male. But regardless of whether or not he is called upon, the family head is always nearby keeping a protective eye on things. When the hen is not laying the pair loaf and feed together, generally appearing to enjoy life. But incubation is a serious matter and is only interrupted for brief periods.

About 85% of the eggs hatch under normal conditions. Too much rain makes incubation impossible and none will hatch until a drier nest site is available. On the other hand, extreme dryness and high ground temperatures will kill some embryos and reduce the number of eggs that hatch. This kind of curtailed production is noticeable to the bird

hunter who hunts the same ranges season after season—the same as are the years of unusually high production.

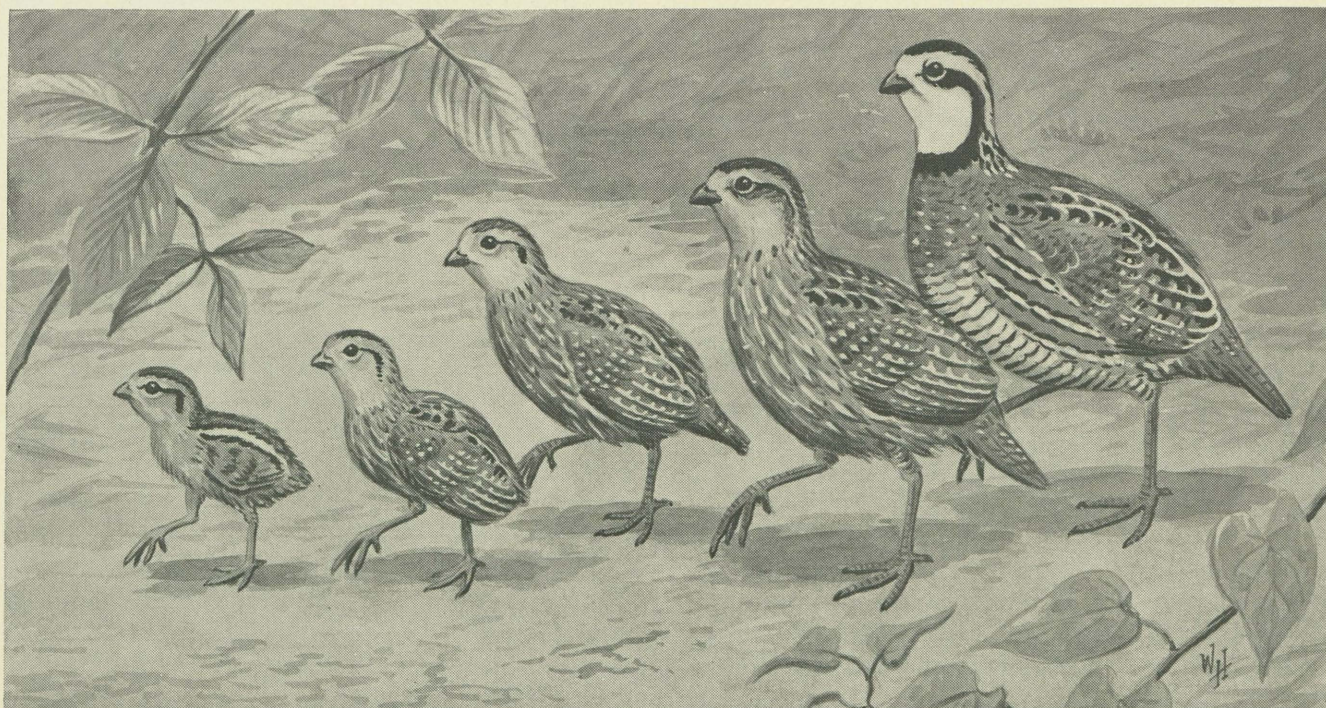
When quail chicks are hatched they are covered with down and weigh only a quarter of an ounce. But in only a week the first specks of juvenile feathers appear on their tiny wings. At two weeks they have doubled their weight and have enough wing feathers to be able to fly short distances. By the end of six weeks they weigh about two ounces and appear almost half the size of adult birds. At ten weeks they're four-ouncers and almost grown. By the 15th week they are independent of their parents and weigh around five ounces. Figuring from a hatching date of around the first of July it is then mid-October. The family remains together until the plentiful summer foods and protective vegetation become sparse, forcing them to wander apart in search of sustenance and security. Family ties gradually dissolve during these wanderings. Birds tend to re-group with others they meet and new coveys of intermixed young and the surviving older birds are formed for the winter season. This subtle process is aptly called the "fall shuffle."

The new social units do everything together. They "freeze" together, flush together and roost together—heads all facing outward, in circular, wagon train fashion, for protection; huddled shoulder to shoulder for warmth.

Around 80% of the winter quail population is composed of young of the year birds, which simply means there is an 80% turnover in the population every year. Studies in many states confirm that this high mortality occurs whether hunting is
(Continued on next page)

For the sake of comparison, young quail illustrated below are shown at ages 1 week, 2 weeks, 4 weeks, 8 weeks and 16 weeks, the age at which they are practically indistinguishable from adults. Young quail can take short flights at two weeks. Of the winter population, 80% were hatched the preceding summer.

Illustrations By Wallace Hughes



This pointer wears a "job well done" look; has earned the compliment from its owner, who seems to have done pretty well himself. These plump Florida bobwhites, baked and basted to golden brown, are enough to make a man "swallow his tongue," as the saying goes. Anyway, they make delicious eating.



(Continued from preceding page)

allowed or not. Adverse weather is the primary cause of low production. Natural predation reduces the number of chicks each pair of quail bring to maturity. But the rate at which the losses are made up from one season to the next is just phenomenal. When population levels are down, production rockets upward; when the birds are crowding a given range, production slacks. Biologists call it the *principle of inversivity*. This is why it does not take four or five seasons to rebuild a low quail population. With favorable climatic conditions, two pairs from a covey can replace all their winter losses.

Some of the favorite food items of Florida quail are acorns, peanuts, corn, lespedeza, partridge peas, beggarweed, ragweed, wax myrtle, gallberries, various grass seeds, green vegetation and pine mast. The quail is primarily a seed eater and does not require a wide range of plant foods. Quantity and availability of a few staples is thought to be far more important than quality or variety. *The* most important factor in quail management, however, is proper *interspersation* of food and cover—meaning that the two must be in close proximity to *each other* as well as being widely distributed over a given tract of land. Quail will not move so far from cover that they cannot reach safety quickly if disturbed—not even for choice food.

If you have quail on your property you probably are doing this, but if you *want* quail, give them mixed habitat—clumps of cover, strips of native grasses and trees, brushy fence rows and field corners, tracts of hardwoods left among the pines and

a couple of rows of unharvested corn left at the edges of the field. And learn how to use fire as an ally. Judicious prescribed burning encourages the kinds of annual plants on which quail thrive and suppresses the perennials which produce little or no food for game birds.

Hunting quail calls for a fairly open bored shotgun, say improved cylinder, and shot sizes from 7½ to 9 in regular field loads. With such a combination you'll want to take your shots fairly quickly while the pattern is still dense enough to do the job and while the speedy targets are inside 35 yards, a distance flushed quail can easily cover in two seconds.

And quail hunting is a dog man's sport, of course. To a dedicated bird hunter it is pure pleasure to watch his dogs work the coverts, find birds, nail them down with a steady point, honor each other and gently retrieve birds if he's on target with the old scattergun. There are few thrills like it, and quail hunters love to get together to compare dogs, guns and hunting tales, some of which get pretty far out—like the old one about the pointer who was so good it herded a whole covey of birds into a gopher hole and, placing its paw over the opening, released them one at a time for its master . . . and the one about the dog that stiffened on point in front of a man whose name, it turned out, was Partridge.

There must be hundreds of such stories—maybe one for every quail hunter in Florida, which leads one to believe that it's bird hunters, not blondes, who have more fun. ●

Commercial Hunting Preserves In Florida—1968-1969

FOR THOSE ON the go, commercial hunting preserves offer the surest and most enjoyable gunning available. For example, a businessman entertaining an outdoor-minded associate or client can rely on the commercially operated preserve to provide a memorable day afield.

Operated in accordance with state law, the commercial hunting preserve in Florida must meet exacting requirements. Minimum numbers of certain pen-reared game birds must be released within an enclosed tract of not more than 1000 acres. Recovery rates are excellent. In a recent season—which runs from October 1 through April 20 each year—about 90% of the pheasant and 73% of the bobwhite quail released were harvested by happy gunners.

The regular Florida hunting license is valid on commercial hunting preserves, or the hunter may purchase a special Series H hunting license, at \$5.50, valid *only* on licensed preserves and good for the season. This license is available to residents of the state and non-residents for the same price.

There are no bag limits for released game taken on a hunting preserve. Only the hunter's desire—and his pocketbook—limits his take. Fees for a day or a half-day hunt ordinarily include specified numbers of different species of game. Any taken above the agreed upon numbers cost extra but come at reduced rates.

The hunting preserve industry, which includes licensed game farming—the source of the most of the game birds for commercial preserves—is growing in Florida. Busy people, especially near populous areas, have found in the commercial preserve the solution to the where-to-hunt problem. Consequently, preserves are taking more and more of the hunting pressure off open lands and public hunt areas.

Always make reservations for your preserve hunt. This avoids disappointment and assures you and your party of a warm welcome, a first class hunt and plenty of game. ●

Preserve	Acreage in Preserve	County Where Located	Game Species Available	Lodging	Meals	Guides	Hunt transport.	Dogs	Game cleaning	Licenses	Guns & Ammo.
1. Argo Farms Thomas H. Baker P. O. Box 1812 Ft. Myers, Fla. 33901 Tel. (813) 334-1333	300	Lee	Q, P, C, D, T.	X	X	X	X	X			X
2. Bonnette Hunting Preserve W. A. Bonnette, Jr. 5309 Hood Road Lake Park, Fla. 33403 Tel. (305) 746-7378	1000	Palm Beach	Q, P, T.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
3. Hatchett Creek Hunting Preserve John Titus Box 364, Route 2 Gainesville, Fla. 32601 Tel. (904) 372-3908	1000	Alachua	Q, P.		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
4. Jays Hunting Preserve Joseph M. Messana 14080 N.W. 20th Court Opa-Locka, Fla. 33054 Tel. (305) 685-2453	250	Highlands	Q, T.	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
5. Loxahatchee Shooting Preserve S.A. & B.H. Belcher P. O. Box 176 Loxahatchee, Fla. 33470 Tel. (305) 683-2100	700	Palm Beach	Q, P, C, D, T, G.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
6. P K Ranch P. K. Smith Route 3, Box 445 Brooksville, Fla. 33512 Tel. (904) 796-3040	1000	Hernando	Q, P, C, T, H.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
7. Riverside Villas Hunting Preserve B. J. Dixon P. O. Box 8 Homosassa Springs, Fla. 32647 Tel. (904) 795-3491	1000	Citrus	Q, P, C.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
8. Saran Ranch Shooting Preserve John M. Hammer Route 2, Box 242 Dade City, Fla. 33525 Tel. (904) 588-3809	1000	Pasco	Q, P, D, T.			X	X	X		X	X
9. Staton's Shooting Preserve Arvil Staton 734 Fifth Avenue South Naples, Fla. 33940 Tel. (813) Midway 2-5161	1000	Lee	Q.			X	X	X	X	X	X
10. V O Shooting Preserves Paul H. Carson Route 2, Box 869 Arcadia, Fla. 33821 Tel. (813) Walnut 9-5151	1874	Sarasota	Q, T, H.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
11. Ward's Deer Ranch W. H. Ward & Son P. O. Box 697 Crestview, Fla. 32536 Tel. (904) 682-2434	720	Okaloosa	Dr.	X	X	X	X		X		
12. El Rancho Hunting and Fishing Preserve Rex T. Yates El Rancho Chipley, Fla. 32428 Tel. (904) 638-1353	291	Washington	D.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Game Legend: Q—Quail, P—Pheasant, C—Chukar, T—Turkey, G—Guinea, D—Mallard Duck, Dr.—Deer, H—Wild Hog.

IF THERE COULD BE such a thing as a truly all-around gun for Florida—or anywhere else—gun lovers would be deprived of their fun and it would be bad for the firearms business in general.

Anybody who likes to shoot generally ends up with extra guns and is usually scheming how to get more. I'm as bad as most though not a true gun collector.

A year ago I got the idea of putting together a little heap of pieces that could be assembled into any kind of gun a Florida shooter needed and it turned out simpler than you'd think.

Oh, I'm not a gunsmith. The manufacturers gave me the idea by building guns with easily interchangeable barrels, a development of recent years. They also make stocks that are easily interchanged and they have put rifle sights on shotgun barrels. The manufacturers have built low-powered scopes that will work on shotguns, and possibly the biggest forward stride of all is in shotgun ammunition.

Gun nuts, I hope, will read this with interest. I

have no illusions that they will sell all their pets and rush out to buy what I recommend herewith, but some of them might glean something from the experimenting I did.

Those who firmly believe the adage, "Beware of the man with one gun," will go with me part way, at least, and will see virtue in using the same firearm for several purposes if only to be familiar with how it works. All of us have flubbed on game because we had recently switched guns and forgot to pump a slide, work a lever, change triggers on a double—or something.

Of course the gun and parts I ended up with wouldn't perfectly suit either you or me for every one of the purposes listed, but I doubt if my bag of game would suffer much if I used only the one outfit.

You might say it's a little like the durable axe that had gone through four new blades and three new handles and was still working perfectly, but it

All Around Hunting Gun

some ideas about one gun for all styles of hunting



When you use rifle sights, it is smart to try "steady" positions whenever possible, especially when seeking fast moving game. The author, at lower left, practices with his slug-shooting combination, and uses a rifleman's coat to soak up recoil action.

By CHARLES WATERMAN



isn't so much where you go as how you went and the trip was educational to me.

I started out with a 12-gauge Remington Model 870 trap gun. It's a pump but the same sort of outfit can be assembled around any number of late model shotguns. I think I made a good choice but there may be others just as good.

I'm not a trapshooter but I'd long had an itch to shoot at just a few clay birds with exactly the right equipment, and a friend of mine has long used a standard trap gun on ducks and high-flying doves with remarkable success. I refused to admit this was skill and credited his score to the gun he was using.

Now as a trap gun my 870 has a 30-inch, full-choke barrel, a ventilated rib and a stock that's longer and straighter than convenient for most game shooting. For a rookie trapshooter like me it's likely a modified or improved-modified barrel would have been better as with the latest types of ammunition a full choke is unnecessarily tight for targets thrown at 16 yards, but there are other trapshooting games that require as tight a pattern as you can get so let's say I have a satisfactory trap gun.

The trap stock is longer and straighter (less drop) than the field or skeet stock for several reasons.

In the first place trap targets are still rising when broken at the right time, which means you want a gun that shoots a little high and the straighter stock makes it do so. You simply see a little more of the barrel or rib when using a straight stock, and that means your hold is a bit over the target—a built-in lead.

Again, the long, straight stock saves punishment in recoil and trapshooters may fire hundreds of rounds over a weekend. Finally, a trapshooter cheeks his gun before calling for the target, and speed in mounting is unimportant. He has time to fit his shoulder and cheek to the long stock whereas a shorter stock is faster. My trap gun, designated as a model TB, has a recoil pad.

Now for skeet and informal clay target games like Crazy Quail: The long, straight stock of the trap gun is preferred by some skeet shooters now that skeet rules permit the gun to be mounted before the target is called for, but most of them use a stock of field measurements. It happens that the Remington and Winchester field measurements suit me perfectly for field shooting so I bought an extra stock and then had a recoil pad installed to make it the same length as it came from the factory.

I have no complaints with recoil pads. Better shots than I say the give of the pad throws them off on a second quick shot, but for a guy like me who probably has his feet and eyes crossed anyway the padding is nice. I also like the non-slip qualities of a pad if you lean a gun against something with the butt on a smooth surface.

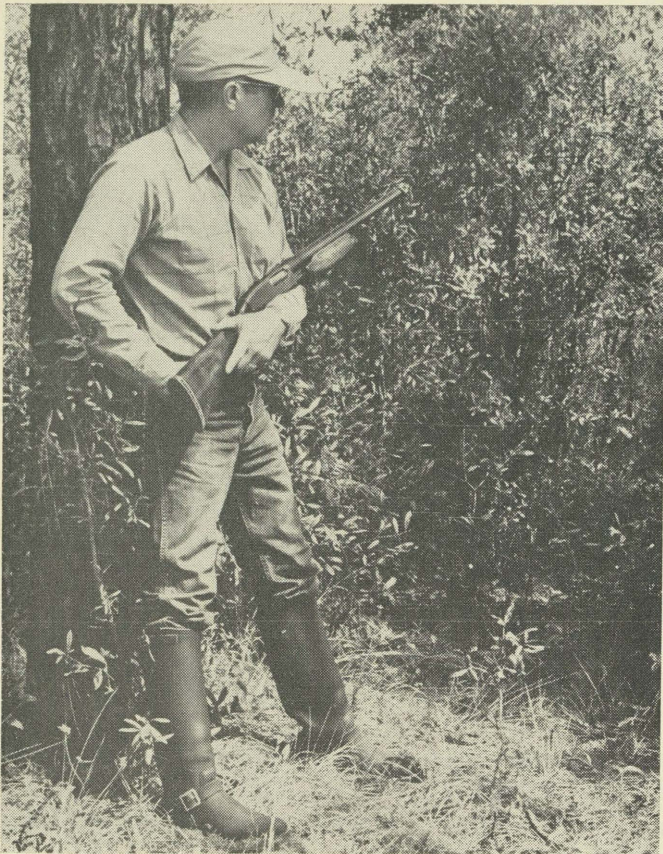
For a mediocre shot the full choke trap barrel has little Florida hunting application except for pass shooting on ducks, long tries at turkeys or attempts at extremely high doves. A 30-inch barrel on a repeater makes the whole gun too long for convenience and the fable that barrel length adds materially to pattern or "hard shooting" is a carry-over from the days of black powder.

If I have a real quirk about shotguns it's a liking for compactness and that's led me to prefer doubles for most purposes—but back to the all-around gun:

I needed a shorter barrel so I got a 26-inch, improved cylinder tube with a ventilated rib. It is interchangeable in seconds and I figured if I could sell a story on my follies I'd be able to pay for it.

Truth is the improved cylinder barrel came very near to making me an all purpose shotgun all by itself. With the new sleeved-wad shells it patterned as a weak modified barrel, just about ideal for a compromise gun on everything from bobwhites to decoyed ducks. With it I had pretty good luck on mallards but I decided to continue my experiments by getting an adjustable muzzle device.

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Some shotgun owners have uncomplimentary names for muzzle devices, calling them "plumber's friends," "birdcages" and worse. I confess that I'd had sad experiences with them in the past and one I had used managed to achieve a blown pattern you could kick a Weimaraner through. The one place a bird was safe was in the center and he could have had his friends with him.

But I was experimenting so I sent the barrel to Poly Choke to have a device installed giving an overall length of 25 inches. With that length of barrel on a pumpgun you get about the same overall length as a double with 28-inch barrels.

The results shook me. That Poly gave beautiful patterns, exactly as marked on the adjusting sleeve, using modern wads. The only exception was the "Extra Full" setting which was a little overchoked for some sizes of shot, and the Poly folks said that was to be expected and even I had it figured out.

So what do you think about my muzzle device now? Well, it works beautifully. I do not like to use one with no rib on the barrel because I am bothered by the knob out there, but with a rib there seems to be no problem.

There was nothing special about this installation of the choking device and the Poly people didn't even know I was going to talk about it to anyone, let alone blab it in print. With this device on a repeater you have about the nearest to an all-around gun-for-everything that's available without

With the increased efficiency of late model slugs and buckshot, the Remington 870 makes a good deer stand companion. Checking a shotgun pattern is something all shooters should do—but few bother. It will make a hunter more successful.

extra barrels. It has a special adjustment for shooting slugs.

For years I thought anyone who would shoot a slug at a deer did so because he couldn't afford a Revolutionary War musket and I thought the slug was the original unguided missile. Then, when thoughtful shotgun manufacturers began building special guns with sights intended for slug shooting, I figured it was simply a poor substitute in areas where rifles were illegal for safety reasons.

My original idea may have been correct but the slug has been developed to the point that it's a real deer slayer up to around 100 yards, probably doing better at that range than most of us can point it from the offhand position.

Of course at really close range nothing on the continent could soak up shotgun slugs without folding; even an Alaskan bear or moose. A Florida whitetail certainly can't carry many.

Shotgun slugs, being heavy and slow moving, will go through brush much better than faster, lighter projectiles but they lose velocity fast, making them essentially short-range cartridges and hence safer around populated areas.

I became sold on shotgun slugs when I talked to Captain Bill Andreasen of San Mateo, California, a police armament expert. Since his business is to investigate police weapons and purchase proper

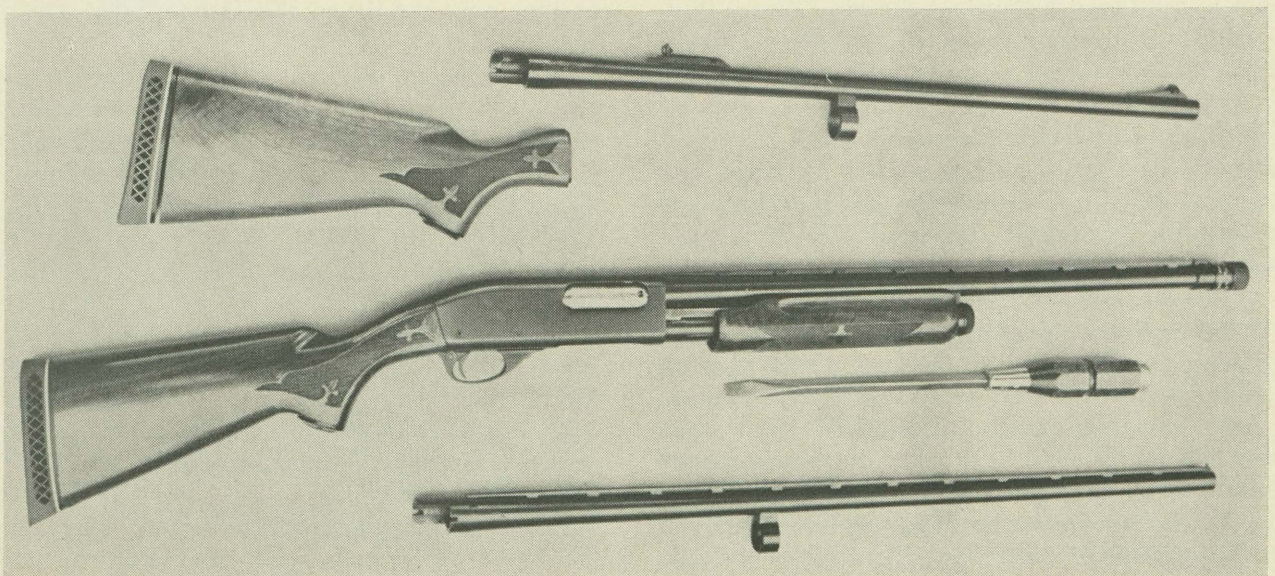
equipment, and since he isn't in the business of selling guns or ammunition, I especially valued his opinions. His tests had been more extensive than those of the average hunter and he is completely sold on the shotgun slug although he has a roomful of rifle and pistol trophies he won in competition. Andreassen figures an assortment of buckshot and slug cartridges with a 12-gauge repeating shotgun makes the best combination for a policeman, not excepting the sub-machine gun and the high-powered rifle. He demonstrates accuracy I didn't believe possible, using a Remington 870 riot gun (same action as on my outfit).

If you want to hunt deer with slugs there is nothing wrong with any standard shotgun barrel but a slight choke of about improved cylinder seems to be preferred for maximum accuracy.

Now that the slug load has been developed to such accuracy, more refined sights are worthwhile and the Remington slug barrel is 20 inches long, improved cylinder, with rifle sights. Of course it works fine with buckshot too, and to get the very most out of it you can mount a low-powered telescopic sight for the slugs although I think any scope is in the way for buckshot. Some shooters say even the open rifle sights bother them when they use shot.

So by this time, the all-around shotgun has become rather expensive but pretty efficient. We have one action and slide, a special stock for trap and three barrels—the Poly Choked one, the long, ribbed trap barrel and a rifle sighted barrel for deer hunting. You could get by very nicely with just the variable choked barrel and the single stock but we're closer to the ideal with our bundle of pieces.

Pieces that make up the all-around gun. Straight trap stock and rifle-sighted slug barrel are shown above the Remington 870, wearing here a short barrel with a Poly Choke and the field stock. The 30 inch trap barrel is shown at bottom and the oversized screwdriver is needed for all stock changing.



The long, slim sighted plane of the trap barrel is a decided help at trap ranges and for very long shots on doves or ducks. Out past 40 yards the shotgun isn't exactly aimed but it certainly is pointed carefully, and some good shooters who say they don't even see the barrel, rib or sights on bobwhite shooting will suddenly get a little persnickity about sights for long shots.

Now I love double guns, especially over-unders. It would make me happy to announce that the perfect Florida combination is a fine double with interchangeable sets of barrels or even a single set bored improved cylinder and full choke, but it ain't so unless you're very lucky or very good.

The worst disadvantage of the double is in shooting the rifled slug. Although double barreled shotguns are regulated to put both charges pretty close to the same pintail it's seldom that they point at nearly enough the same spot to be satisfactory with slugs, and it takes a wizard to hold off just the right amount to hit with both barrels. Good doubles are more expensive than repeaters because there's more hand fitting and as you may have heard, labor costs are up a bit.

The automatic is the most desired of shotguns in America. It is more expensive than the pump and it is more complicated of construction.

Let's be frank about automatics. They shoot faster and have almost replaced the pumpgun on doubles at trap and on the skeet fields where their chief competition now is the over-under. Like the Remington 870 we have followed through with exercise in gun nut foolishness, many automatics now have easily interchangeable barrels.

Automatics require more care. With three shots to two in a double or over-under, and with faster firing than the pump, an automatic in perfect working order is probably the best game getter of all.

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The author's "all around gun" was bought as trap model so it would fit in perfectly for this kind of shooting at River Ranch Acres.



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Automatics do give trouble with sloppy handloads and with factory ammo when dirty, improperly adjusted or badly worn. They are a little more expensive than pumpguns but with these drawbacks surmounted an auto can be used to replace my "all-around" pump.

Just how important it is to use the same gun or same type of gun for everything depends on the individual shooter.

Some gunners can remember they're shooting a pump in the excitement of flying game, even though brought up on automatics. Some have great difficulty in going from one type of gun to another.

I hunt with a very good shot who changed from a Browning automatic to a Daly over-under. The Daly has a tang safety—simply push it forward and the gun is ready to fire, a feature generally listed as an advantage over the trigger guard safety of the auto, being more natural and faster.

But the safety is also your barrel selector and if you push it to the left before it goes forward the tight barrel fires; to the right the open barrel fires. Generally you simply set it on the side you figure you want it and push it straight ahead when you're ready to shoot.

Well, my friend never learned to push it straight forward. He'd continually push it at an angle and it's possible to lock it between the barrel choices so that the gun won't fire at all. He must have failed to fire at least a dozen times before he went back to his automatic. On one occasion he stuck the safety five times straight. It became an obsession.

I have nearly pulled my arm off trying to work a slide that wasn't there when using an automatic. I have failed to operate a pumpgun slide when used to a double and I have failed to change triggers on a two-triggered gun when used to a single trigger. I know shooters who have trouble going from the Winchester repeater safety (in front of the trig-

ger) to the Remington, Browning or Franchi (behind the trigger).

For absent-minded or excitable souls, or people who don't shoot regularly, it's likely a single type of action is best and my all-around bundle of parts is not so far-fetched after all.

I selected 12 gauge because I consider it the best shotgun for deer hunting. In a heavy buckshot charge with 1½ ounces of shot you have something more potent than either 20 or 16-gauge buck loads, and in buckshot you need all you can get. The 12-gauge slug is more potent, too.

Now as to the other gauges. The modern, 3-inch 20-gauge magnum with 1¼ ounces of shot is just as deadly, nay more so, than the old-fashioned 12-gauge express loading. The gun is smaller, lighter and handier in most cases. Generally I'd choose it for my Florida shooting, even for ducks. The 3-inch magnum twenty load is more than you could buy for a 12-gauge a few years back because of recent shell and powder developments. A "standard" twenty will shoot a short magnum shell with 1⅞ ounces of shot, equal of the most common, light, 12-gauge load.

The 16-gauge overlaps the 20 and the 12 and I by-pass it for my all-around gun because of the need for really heavy loads for deer and turkey—the short magnum 1½-ounce 12-gauge loading.

What about the magnum 12-gauge shooting 3-inch shells?

It's unnecessary for most shooting, too much gun for most of us and generally pretty heavy, but a decided advantage with buckshot for deer and a good idea for turkey when shooting heavy shot. Now you could get that Remington pump combination in a maggie if you wanted to and probably be well pleased. You could always use standard shells if you wanted to.

Nobody is going out and buy exactly what I have, but I'll bet I gave you some ideas. ●



By ELGIN WHITE

River Cruising

across the northern part of Florida—some three hundred miles in width as the “crow flies”—there are beautiful rivers for “in the wild” boating

TO GET DOWN TO some specifics on questions being asked about Florida cruising waters, in the past few weeks—especially with the truly fine fall weather we had—there have been quite a few about the Suwannee River. “How come you haven’t said anything about the Suwannee lately?”

Well, I’ll tell you! First off, I have done several pieces on the Suwannee, with two of them being feature articles in *FLORIDA WILDLIFE*. And secondly, haven’t been on the Suwannee in some time because of low water.

This is truly a beautiful river to cruise, but when the water on the “old timer” is low as it has been since ‘way back in April, the only cruise area is south of the town of Suwannee.

If you head north, you run into shoal troubles between Suwannee and Branford, and if you put in the water at Branford with the idea of heading north to Ellaville and beyond, you have the same problems. There are several nasty shoals in the river and you can really get fouled up.

So, your only cruise water with an element of safety is from Suwannee south to the Gulf of Mexico. This, of course, is a beautiful run, but to me it is not as enchanting as the northern reaches of the Suwannee, where you tangle with all those curves in the river, and can run into spots like Blue Springs, and Suwannee Springs, and stop off at the Stephen Foster Memorial at White Springs. So, that’s why we haven’t said much about the Suwannee River lately. But if winter and spring rains bring her back to high water, we’re planning another

jaunt to check out what new, if any, facilities have been added to the river. I checked with Florida Boating Council Safety Officer Will May, and he concurred that the waters above U.S. Highway 27 are pretty, but dangerous.

“But if we can get some high water by spring,” May said, “There isn’t a better river for cruising anywhere on this planet.” To that I say “Amen.”

There will be some, however, who will go at the Suwannee even at low water, figuring they can pilot around those shoals. Sure enough, you can if you know every ripple in the current, but take some more advice into consideration if you give it a try, be sure you have plenty of gas and oil aboard to get you back to your starting point.

That’s a long run upriver from Suwannee, and there are no facilities for replenishment up there. Used to be, but when the river goes into these periods of fluctuation, the traffic ceases and the small gas stops that were available dried up for lack of trade.

I also have had some queries about boat traffic on the Chipola River. I have never cruised this wild stream, but Jim Steiner of Marianna has done so, and his advice is “you can do it, but you gotta have a small boat.” There is a section just north of Clarksville where shoals actually form a good rapids, and if you’re going north from Dead Lakes, you literally have to pull the boat over the shoals.

Lt. Jim White of the Florida Board of Conservation reveals that a trip on the Chipola could be a real adventure, and if the water is high, like it usually is in the spring, you can actually start near Marianna and go all the way to Apalachicola by clearing the tumbler dam near Wewahitchka on the south end of the Dead Lakes.

Only problem with this is that the waters have to be “just right,” where the water flow over the dam is no more than two feet above the dam, you’d have trouble clearing under the bridge that crosses the tumbler wall. That’s what I mean when I say the water conditions have to be right on the button to go all the way from Marianna to Apalachicola, but we’re going to give it a try soon as we figure the water is ready.

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The Apalachicola offers fine river cruising in northwest Florida—boaters can expect calm waters for easy going.

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Many of our south Florida readers are missing a bet by not investigating the rivers and by-ways of northern Florida. Of course, most of the boating action is in south Florida where there is an abundance of salt water boating areas. But the best fresh water cruising areas, to my way of thinking, are from central Florida north and west all the way to Pensacola.

There isn't a more beautiful river in the world than the St. Johns, especially from Sanford north to Palatka. The Apalachicola River from the Gulf of Mexico to Chattahoochee is a fine trip, with the side run up the Chipola cut-off to the Dead Lakes, and the Intracoastal Waterway from Apalachicola to Pensacola is truly an interesting cruise.

Likewise, the run on the Intracoastal from Fernandina Beach to St. Augustine is one of the most interesting boat trips you can make. And try the waters of the Escambia and Blackwater Rivers near Pensacola and move on to the very western tip of Florida and the Perdido River that separates our Sunshine State from Alabama.

All these arteries are truly magnificent boating waters and every Florida boatman should give 'em a whirl.

I know I'm going to get a lot of steam from some south Floridians pointing out magnificent boating waters that are NOT in salt water, too. I'll admit there isn't a much prettier cruise to find than the Myakka River south of Venice to the Gulf, and then on up the Peace River to Bartow. But you have to really know your navigation on the Peace. Lots of shoals are there.

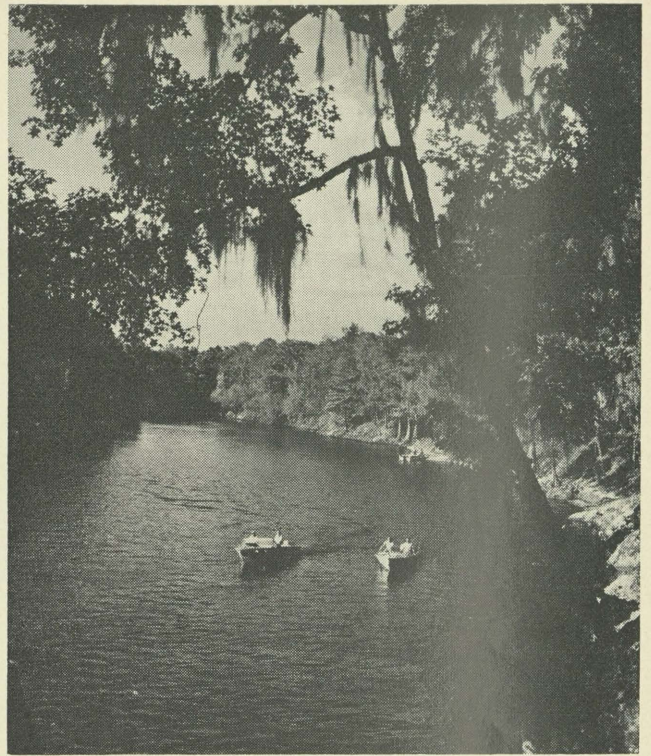
And, another cruise I hope to make soon is through the new canal cut on the Intracoastal from Venice. This opens up the entire western side of the Intracoastal from Fort Myers up to Anclote Key, and undoubtedly will be one of the most scenic boat cruises of all. I look forward to this one.

But, in general, I feel some of our prettiest waters are in the northern half of the state . . . so there.

REPORTS FROM THE licensing division of the Florida Board of Conservation show that Florida now has approximately 300,000 registered boats, placing the Sunshine State in third position among the states for boats. We are right behind New York and California, and about even with Michigan. "You have to remember," Otho Clark, licensing director for the FBC, said, "that we only register boats with motors over 10 h.p. and these other states register anything that floats."

These figures again emphasize the need for boating safety in Florida, where our record is among the best in the nation.

We had more fatalities in boating in 1967 than in the first eight months of 1968, and a lot of credit for that record coming down can go to such units



Those who make it to the northern reaches of the Suwannee River will find breathtaking scenery—the above photo was taken at the Suwannee River State Park, near Ellaville.

as Coast Guard Auxiliaries, sheriff's patrols, the Coast Guard itself and the Florida Boating Council Safety Patrols.

The only trouble is, there aren't enough of any of these safety patrols to really go around. The Florida Boating Council, for example, has only six patrol boats to cover the entire state, and these boats do a bang-up job in the different areas of the state, checking registration, assisting in law enforcement on the water, and participating in rescue operations.

The Florida Boating Council received high praise from officials of the Chicago Boat Show in September when two members of the Patrol, officers Lee Lawler and Glenn Keefer, participated on behalf of the Council for the first time in the big show. They presented Florida's boating safety program before huge crowds, gave away Florida orange juice, and through the courtesy of the Florida Development Commission, passed out thousands of Florida fishing booklets and vacation guides.

Lawler is a perfect person for this type work. I have been with him on several of our boating cruises around Florida, and this big guy can't do enough work.

He is all over the place, either handling boats, packing gear, arranging transportation, moving people from place to place, repairing boats, buying supplies, making 'phone calls, and in the evenings he tells jokes at dinner, keeping everyone involved on any cruise in absolute stitches. He is an ideal public relations man, one who knows his business, meets the public, and doesn't tell others how to run their

business. But he knows his, I'll tell you. I have found that agents of both the Florida Board of Conservation and the Game & Fresh Water Fish Commission are the best PR people the state of Florida has. Of necessity, when we make the various business cruises we do around the state, we utilize these agents for photo purposes as well as many other reasons, and we have never found one of them uncooperative, unavailable, or rude in any manner. Florida is indeed fortunate to secure the services of dedicated personnel in these vital functions of state government.

Many persons are tempted to look down their noses at "state workers," but let me tell you something . . . anybody that has anything to do with water activities will back these guys to the hilt in the job they are doing. They are over-worked, unheralded and for my money they are the most underpaid workers in the entire structure of state government. Next time you see a green car of a Game Commission officer or a gray car of a Conservation officer, tip your hat . . . they are Florida's finest.

I HAVE RECEIVED a lot of inquiries of late requesting information and advice on purchasing a new boat. This information is given, gladly. But the other day I got a different kind of question, which prompts the following information in regard to buying used rigs:

Many experts agree there are advantages worth considering in this idea of purchasing a used boat and motor. But let me advise this . . . do your used boat shopping among reputable marine dealers in your area, so you know the boats and motors you are shown are well-chosen and well-balanced outfits.

This point alone is a big time saver, for there's no need to study boats, motors and accessories individually and then put them all together on your own rig. You get a ready-to-use package.

Here is where buying a good used outfit offers a chance to get onto the water in something you think will probably do, but without investing heavily in it. Should a season of use convince you that something else would better suit your needs, then you can trade in on exactly the right craft.

If you're a capable handyman, ask the dealer to show you what he has in the way of used rigs needing a little work. Often you will find he has in stock trade-in boats they have not had time to clean up and will be glad to move on an as-is basis. Tell the dealer you want something basically sound but in need of refurbishing and cleaning up, and he may show you something you can take home at a mighty attractive price.

Buying a good used boat and motor is no more complicated than getting a good buy in a used car. Just be sure you're dealing with a reputable marine dealer or individual. ●

Fact or Fiction?

By ERNEST SWIFT

National Wildlife Federation

THERE IS AN ADAGE that statements oft repeated become accepted as truths. Some of the great tragedies of human history have been perpetrated because of this human failing.

Does this apply to conservation and is the proper emphasis being put on the important things? The present volume of writing and effort on this subject often appears contradictory. On the one hand there is encouragement by the efforts of many sincere citizen groups determined to educate youth because of the mistakes of their elders. There is a definite striving, both local and national, to imbue the rising generation with the ecological facts of the natural world.

There is also a volume of writing under the pseudo name of conservation that bears only indirectly on the subject and which lacks depth. This type of writing too often deals exclusively with camping, boating, tying flies, hunting and fishing—which in themselves are laudable forms of recreation—but which fail to point out that they can only be enjoyed if someone does some work on the land. In all fairness it should be pointed out that some magazines and newspapers try to sugar coat important issues by appealing to the personal interests of readers.

Serious editorials get less space than the glamour stories. Repetition of basic tenets seems drab and uninteresting and fails to make an impact on those who should get the message.

The volume of these—the scientific, the serious, the nit-picking, the off-the-cuff opinions, the scoffers, the wasters of paper—grow prodigiously. The question is how much of it really hits the bullseye. That is what counts. How much is wasted motion, ineffective though good intentioned, and even detrimental? If all of this is not doing the job fast enough or thoroughly enough—then why not?

All of this raises some big questions. Does it show a defect in the overall leadership or in the disciples? It would appear that there are too many leaders today, both public and private, who are attempting to please everybody or their paid-up followers to the point where there are adverse effects on the really important issues.

Far too many people skirt the important issues; they do not want to get involved; they look upon them as an albatross around their neck; they would rather leave those affairs to others and accept the lighter concepts of personal gratification. Too many leaders are afraid of losing their following if they get too serious, by being too repetitious about the things to be done, by preaching too much.

Because of so many of these cross-current attitudes several questions arise: (1) Has our national
(Continued on next page)

Our record of filthiness and pollution in the midst of plenty is a mark against our society. Are conservationists talking to themselves, and to each other? Youth must be well educated to the mistakes of their elders' numerous natural resource misuse.



(Continued from preceding page)

affluence dulled the edge of husbandry and as a result created a mass-minded monster of selfish interests? There was a time when this nation was less opulent and it was thought the resources were inexhaustible. Resources are not inexhaustible, but our present day opulence has given people the feeling of a constitutional right to luxuries regardless of consequences. In fact, the demands for creature comforts continue to increase to the point where a guaranteed livelihood is demanded without effort.

(2) Have too many subsidies and give-away programs bred a cynical attitude toward thrift, self-reliance and individual responsibility? (3) Are these attitudes developing a vacuum of sloth and indifference? People who demand a gilt-edged Utopia handed to them are not going to concern themselves with what happens to the resources which so far have provided them with their effortless existence. (4) Are the conservationists simply talking to themselves? (5) Are their internal disagreements defeating the main issues? (6) Just how many people would be willing to deny themselves some affluence to guarantee the perpetuity of resources?

I recently read an editorial in a metropolitan newspaper by a rather noted commentator on the affairs of life in which he stated that to him nature meant bugs, burrs, foxtail, buckbrush, poison oak, scratches, bites, torn clothes and grime. He further commented that we have taken a continent unfit for human beings and made it a cornucopia of unprecedented plenty. That we have enormous mas-

tery over nature. That American destiny would be decided in the cities.

He further states that in fifty years we could transform this continent into its original native state. That would take some doing when one considers bringing back the topsoil to Minnesota, Iowa, Wisconsin, and Missouri from the Mississippi Delta, or regrowing a couple of redwoods in fifty years, or cleaning up the Great Lakes. These are just a few of the reconstruction jobs which would have to be undertaken.

I question if too many people really believe such cynical, off-center hypocrisy. But as stated in the beginning, if such statements are repeated often enough, some few are gullible enough to swallow them.

God help America if such attitudes fostered in the city jungle will decide the destiny of our resources and our survival. Fat cities do not thrive on a lean countryside.

The increasing volume of writing today which either centers around our total environment or only certain phases of it is indicative of MAN'S concern and interests. The above quoted type of cockeyed philosophy does not show up too often.

If our cities are producing the complete life, why the animal unrest so prevalent today, and why do people periodically flee from them as if they had a plague and seek some isolation and solitude? It is because they cannot stand the impact of their own creations.

People with a small town, rural background are far less inclined to be running away from their environment as if they were trapped animals. They may take a trip now and then to find out how the rest of the world lives, but in the long run they have found the more perfect life in their own bucolic surroundings. They have to spend some of their time entertaining their city cousins. ●

This article, and others that will appear in the next several issues, were prepared by Ernest F. Swift shortly before July 24, 1968, when he passed away at Rice Lake, Wisconsin.

Outdoor Gifts

there are a good many different style, quality gift suggestions that the variety of outdoor recreation fans can put to immediate use



By EDMUND McLAURIN

ABOUT THIS TIME every year friends start asking for suggestions about one or more practical Christmas gifts for a hunter, fisherman or camper.

Usually I can come up with some recommended purchase, that will likely fit the recipient's needs as well as the donor's Christmas budget.

In making gift suggestions, I do so with firsthand knowledge. I either own the named brand items, or else hunt, fish and camp with companions who do. From association I know just what performance and service can be expected from the various products mentioned.

For a rifleman—target shooter or hunter—a scope sight makes a really nice gift. For hunting in brush get a low-power, preferably 2½X, with boldly visible aiming reticule. For open country hunting, consider a 4 power scope sight with conventional crosshair reticule or dot reticule. Be sure the mounts fit rifle model and scope.

Personally, I prefer quality in any scope sight I use; the shooter on your Christmas list does, too. You cannot go wrong selecting a Redfield, Bausch & Lomb, Bushnell, Leupold, Lyman or Weaver scope. Most named are guaranteed waterproof, and have proven themselves afield countless times.

A peep sight on a hunting rifle or .22 used for general "plinking" is a great improvement over crude open sight combinations.

The rear peep sight that replaces the factory open rear sight must be especially designed to fit the rifle model and of quality construction. Recommended are selections from among the Williams "Foolproof," Redfield "Micro-Steel" and "Trophy" models, and Lyman models 48, 57 and 56.

A new front sight of proper height may be called for. The Redfield "Sourdough" and the Williams "Brilliant Bead" and Lyman ivory bead models can be purchased with confidence in ultimate performance, when correctly teamed with an adjustable peep sight.

The primary purpose of a gun case is to protect the weapon it houses. Good looks are secondary. However, the better quality cases have both practical features and good looks.

There are gun cases and there are gun cases—but some are truly outstanding. The listings include Kolpin Bros. Company Nos. 930 "Jetliner," 210 "Ranger," 710 "Texan" and 390 "Longhorn"; Red Head Brand No. P30WT "President" and Black

Sheep Brand Nos. 589 "Supreme" and 670 "Regent." Get the gift case in proper length, preferably in scope width.

A cardinal rule of sensible gun care is to keep barrel and mechanism clean and free of rust or lead residue deposits. For barrel cleaning, only the best quality cleaning rods should ever be used. If your gift recipient does not have a good rifle, shotgun or pistol cleaning rod, consider giving him one.

Outers Laboratories, Inc., Onalaska, Wisconsin 54650 makes a very high quality stainless steel cleaning rod, known as the "Imperial" and made in rifle, pistol and shotgun sizes. Belding & Mull, Phillipsburg, Pennsylvania 16866, also makes a top quality stainless steel rod.

For the active shotgunner a clay pigeon target thrower is a gift that will see use. Everyone who shoots a shotgun needs the practice of shooting at fast-sailing, small inanimate targets.

Fine for family or group use is the Outers Laboratories No. 202 "Vandalia" trap. It operates from a tripod and gives shooters choice of any normal flight angle as well as double targets, with minimum manual operation.

Much smaller, and very economical, are hand traps made by Remington, Winchester and Melco. The last throws both single and double targets. I like the Remington. It seems to swing naturally and gives easy directional control of released clays.

Due to emotionally engendered national gun legislation—an aftermath of the Kennedy assassinations—ammunition purchases are now both restrictive and complex. This puts an especial burden on the shotgunner who likes trap and Skeet shooting, and the rifleman who fires away at paper targets of weekends. However—so far—reloading components can still be had. Hand reloading calls for a simple, but dependable successive stage reloading tool, made for the particular caliber or shotshell gauge to be reloaded. Precision, combined with safety, are keynotes.

One of the MEC shotshell reloading tools will make an excellent gift to a shotgunner who shoots a lot. For the rifleman, a Hollywood Sr. or a RCBS A-2 tool will give long, dependable service.

Game calls make good stocking-stuffers, and duck, dove, crow and owl decoy figures show up strikingly beneath a Christmas tree. Green Head, Olt, Lohman,
(Continued on next page)

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Faulk, Hinman and Burnham are some of the widely used game call brands. The better grade decoys bear brand names like Deek, Victor, Bean and Carry-lite.

Bowhunters represented on your Christmas list? How about a Florida-made Bradshaw hunting bow, custom tailored by Glenn Bradshaw, Tarpon Springs, Florida 33589, along with a set of arrows correctly spined for the bow's power?

Mention of bowhunting brings to mind the use of camouflage by bowhunters, dove hunters and waterfowlers. For them, Kamo brand clothing items, stocked by most sporting goods stores, will make ideal gifts. A lightweight Kamo parka (No. 170) is a very versatile garment afield.

If the man in your life is a deer hunter, using either gun or bow, and is tired of competing for occupancy of permanent type tree-seats built in popular hunting areas, consider giving him a portable type tree-seat. Garland Creason, Tampa, markets a portable platform that can be quickly attached to any forest tree and as quickly removed. It will hold a 250 pound person without even an objectionable groan.

Also new this year is a very compact portable seat distributed by Lyman Rogers, of Reddick, Florida 36286, featuring a small, plastic seat and woven nylon automobile safety belt webbing and buckles, for fast, silent set-up in a chosen hunting spot. The entire affair can be carried in one hand or tucked into game bag section of hunting coat.

The ground-level hunter, whether he hunts with rifle, shotgun or bow, will find plenty of practical use for a comfortable folding stool, with zippered accessories' bag slung beneath the seat.

Those of Kamo, Black Sheep Brand and L. L. Bean are typical.

Also available is the Hunter "Cool Stool," much like rivals in appearance, but featuring an insulated bag to carry cold drinks as well as usual field items.

If you give a sportsman a pair of quality boots, you will be giving him many pleasurable days of foot comfort—something very, very important to the enjoyment, if not actual success, of a field trip.

Buy only quality boots, made by a nationally known manufacturer and purchase with the understanding that final fit and decision will rest with recipient.

You cannot go wrong selecting a pair of all leather Red Wing "Irish Setter" boots or a pair of Bass "Quail Hunter" 9-inch height all leather boots.

If a boot style that incorporates flexible leather tops and rubber bottom (foot area) is preferred choice, then either a pair of L. L. Bean "Maine Hunting" shoes or a pair of Converse "No-Bite" boots will be an appreciated gift.

For camp, and for wear around the house, L. L.

Bean, Inc., Freeport, Maine 04032, catalogs an all leather, light tan, hard-soled slipper that cannot be surpassed for quality, style, comfort and long wear. I wear a pair of these slippers around home of evenings, as well as when I am relaxing in some remote camp. The change to the slippers is always a restful experience.

Along with comfortable boots, a hunter likes a comfortably fitting coat, with numerous large pockets located at just the right places. In hunting coats, the 10-X No. 452 Upland Game Coat and No. 453 Standard Hunting Coat, made by 10-X Mfg. Company, Des Moines, Iowa 50309; the Red Head Brand "Squaltex" model, and the Black Sheep "Country Gentleman" model, are excellent. They have to be seen to be fully appreciated.

For the competitive or occasional trap or skeet shooters, either a 10-X No. 103 Trap and Skeet shooting jacket, or a 10-X Bush Coat can be selected with confidence. Both are stylish and of high quality.

Clothing items like those mentioned are never voluntarily discarded; seemingly, they are loved and worn as long as they hold together—and that means years of use.

If you want to give a truly appreciated gift, give that of assured sleeping comfort. That means a high grade sleeping bag, preferably combined with a quality inflatable air mattress.

Get the best; a cheap, poorly made bag won't serve practical purpose. Neither will a cheap air mattress.

You cannot go wrong choosing a Coleman "Tri-Temp" No. 815A881, or a Thermos model 8231 or 8240 sleeping bag, the last being for a sleeper of large, tall physique.

In making purchase of supplementary air mattress, consider the No. 573 and 575 models in the nationally distributed Hodgman line or the "Tufted" model of the Alaska Sleeping Bag Company, Beaverton, Oregon 97005.

A combination Thermos bottle and sandwich box set, housed in its own vinyl case, makes a very useful Christmas gift. The better ones generally have two large Thermos bottles with drinking cup-caps and large capacity sandwich box with locking cover—all inside a carrying case.

Take a look at Thermos Models Nos. 332 and 334 "Plaid," or Nos. 372 and 374 "Kangeroo" models, if you are seeking the most for your money.

There are probably a hundred different makes of ice and food storage chests. They also run the gamut in quality and useful life.

A good chest must be well insulated, have tight closure, rugged hardware and handles and an exterior that will take abuse.

I recommend you examine both the Coleman model 5254 "Low Boy" that fits easily in car, and the attractive and practical Thermos No. 7158, stocked by sporting goods stores, hardware stores and some of the larger department stores.

If an insulated ice bag is preferred, consider one cataloged by L. L. Bean, Inc. I've used one for years with perfect satisfaction. The bag is tough, yet good-looking. Better yet, it truly insulates.

The sportsman who camps out can always use a quality set of nesting aluminum cooking utensils. Palco or Mirro brand can be recommended with confidence. Individual, as well as 2 and 4 party, kits can be had. A gallon size Palco canteen is a good supplementary item, if a second gift is planned.

When buying a camp stove for a gift, you want to give dependable service along with safe operation. I can heartily recommend either the Coleman model 413G499 two-burner gasoline stove, or the small Coleman one-burner "Sportsman," the latter being especially handy for roadside snacks. In the same high quality class is the Thermos model 82423 gasoline stove, a real performer when it comes to fast preparation of tasty food dishes afield.

Gasoline lanterns provide excellent illumination source for safe outdoor living activity—provided the products are efficient. Both the Coleman No. 200A195 one-burner and the Coleman No. 220F195 two-burner models are good, challenged only by the Thermos No. 8312 single and Thermos No. 8326 double-burner models.

For tent or duck blind heating, a Coleman No. 515-700 Catalytic Heater can't be beat.

If the gift is to be a conventional hand flashlight, you cannot give a better flashlight than the Ray-O-Vac "Sportsman," either 2 or 3 cell size. I've given this particular model just about every abuse imaginable, and my "Sportsman" light still works.

If a larger 6-volt type of hand lantern is being considered, then compare the features of the Ray-O-Vac "Sportsman Model 303," the Burgess "Dolphin" and the Ray-O-Vac Model L295 "Nite-Hawk." Any of the three will surely be welcomed as a gift.

A "Zippo" cigarette lighter or one of the new, sensational "Metal-Match" units beats a folder of safety matches by a mile when it comes to lighting camp-fires in wet weather. Neither gift will seriously deplete your Christmas gift money allowance, yet will be a real stocking-stuffer surprise.

A small, but powerful pocket transistor radio *with personal earphone* is a gift an overnight camper will surely appreciate. The owner can lie in cabin bunk or tent bed and enjoy relaxing music and follow news and weather reports without the radio disturbing companions.

Get one of name brand, powerful enough to bring in distant as well as local area stations, and preferably of single 9-volt, round mercury cell operation rather than one of multiple penlight battery power source. The larger, single batteries seem to last longer; most certainly they are easier to change.

An emergency whistle of loud, sharply defined, distance carrying tone makes a good, inexpensive gift for a sportsman. Bill Boatman Company, Bain-

bridge, Ohio 45612, catalogs one that can be heard for a mile. L. L. Bean, Inc., offers a combination emergency whistle, match container and reasonably accurate compass.

Is your intended gift recipient a dog man? If he is, quite likely he would be pleased with a one-piece steer horn dog caller, or a "silent," high frequency whistle. Bill Boatman Company catalogs two styles of steer horn callers as well as the whistle.

Does that sportsman in your life have a sporty, eye-catching outdoorsman style hat? There are several of likely happy acceptance. Besides the "Bronco" and "High Roller" Western style hats by Stetson, there are practical, good looking head coverings made on African safari style and Australian bush-hunter design.

Norm Thompson Company, Portland, Oregon 97209, has a hat style long used by professional big game hunters in Africa; it is known as "The Kenya Bush" model, and features choice of genuine African zebra or antelope band. L. L. Bean, Inc., catalogs an outdoor hat stylish Australian bush design, called "The Allagash," with a concealed-in-crown emergency insect protection net.

Bill Boatman Company has a two-tone waterproof hunting hat made on the Jones style. It can be had in various colors. An attractive outdoor scene emblem graces the front. Even more distinctive is the scarlet "Matterhorn" model nylon hat offered by Deerskin Trading Post, Danvers, Massachusetts 01923.

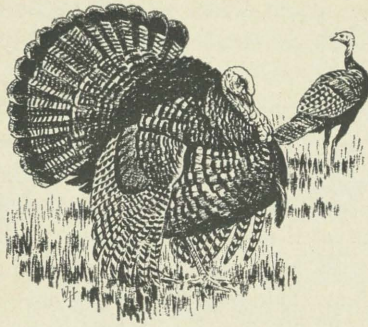
Outdoorsman need gloves? Good Luck "Blue Ribbon" brand No. 683 red-dyed deerskin gloves, or L. L. Bean's "Sure Grip" chestnut brown deer-skin gloves are selections you can make with assurance of wearer satisfaction. If an all wool glove is preferred, consider the "Blue Ribbon" style Nos. 1510, 1520 or 1540.

A knife is a personal gift. To be of practical use, it must be the right type and of unquestionable steel quality. Unless lost, a good knife will last the average user a lifetime. Sheath knives are often preferred by hunters and fishermen. Brands like Case, Buck, Randall and Kinfolks have reputations for quality.

Case makes a "Twin Finn" knife set—a 5-inch blade knife and a 3-inch saber blade knife contained in one piggy-back style sheath. If choice is a single sheath knife, consider the Case "Cheyenne" model; the Buck "Woodsmen," "Pathfinder," "Personal" and "Fisherman" models; the Randall model Nos. 3, 4, 7, 11 and 20.

The recommendations may cost a little more than other brands but you will be getting quality.

Some sportsmen would rather have an oversize, all purpose pocket knife, than a sheath style knife. Case makes a big, heavy one with two blades that will do any camp job. Bill Boatman's "Skinner" model is another. ●



CONSERVATION SCENE

Save The Estuaries

A BROAD CAMPAIGN to alert the country to the critical condition of the Atlantic Coast estuaries was announced recently by the American Littoral Society.

The Society's campaign will cover the Atlantic Coast from Maine to the Gulf of Mexico. It will include an inventory of estuarine resources, watchdogging operations which threaten those resources, and a program of conservation education.

"In the recent development of interest in the ocean depths, we seem to have lost sight of the importance of the estuaries," said Society President John Clark, in making the announcement. "The wealth of our estuarine frontier, including the coastal marshes, tidelands, bays, sounds, and tidal rivers is being rapidly dissipated because of the lack of understanding of their unique values."

The program is funded by grants from the Old Dominion Foundation and the American Conservation Association. Derickson W. Bennett of Corning, N.Y., has been appointed conservation director. He is assistant to the president of Corning Community College and before that was a newspaper reporter and a writer for Harvard University and Corning Glass Works. He will begin his activities at the Society's headquarters at Sandy Hook, N.J.

Bennett's conservation program will involve a volunteer corps of Society members—the Alert Corps—who will conduct systematic studies of estuarine conservation talks and demonstrations. The Society will provide back-

ground information for the campaign.

Among the estuarine problems that the Society will focus on are: the effects of pollution upstream, at the bay mouths, and offshore; the conflict between developing estuarine areas for housing and industry and preserving them for fishing, recreation, nature study, and scenic enjoyment; the conflict between the navigational and the ecological needs of estuaries; and the complexities of local, state, and federal laws which govern the use of coastal lands.

Detailing the conservation program, Clark said, "Our area of interest is under heavy population pressures. Almost half the nation's population lives within a day's drive of the coast. Over 50 percent of the estuarine area has already been lost in certain areas and this is the area where about 65 percent of our fish population either breeds or spends its juvenile period of growth.

"There has to be a balance between the legitimate human needs for space on the coastline and the wildlife needs for the same area. If this balance is not struck soon, the values which attract man to the ocean will be lost forever. An acre of marsh covered with refuse or filled in for housing is a lost resource and these resources are being lost too fast.

"Our program will take into account the needs of the commercial fisherman, the sports fisherman, the boat owner, the people who simply wander the beaches and marshes, as well as the needs of communities and industries located near the shore."

MOVING?

If you are planning to move, please send notification four weeks before changing address. Send your address label from a current issue, plus your NEW address. This will ensure continued subscription service.

The American Littoral Society is a non-profit organization that was started in 1961 by a group of fishermen, skin divers, and nature lovers interested in the preservation of the estuarine area. It has since grown to an organization of several thousand with members throughout the country.

Hunting Compendium

WHAT GAME species are legal in what states? How abundant are our game populations? Where are the best hunting areas? What is the season and what are the limits?

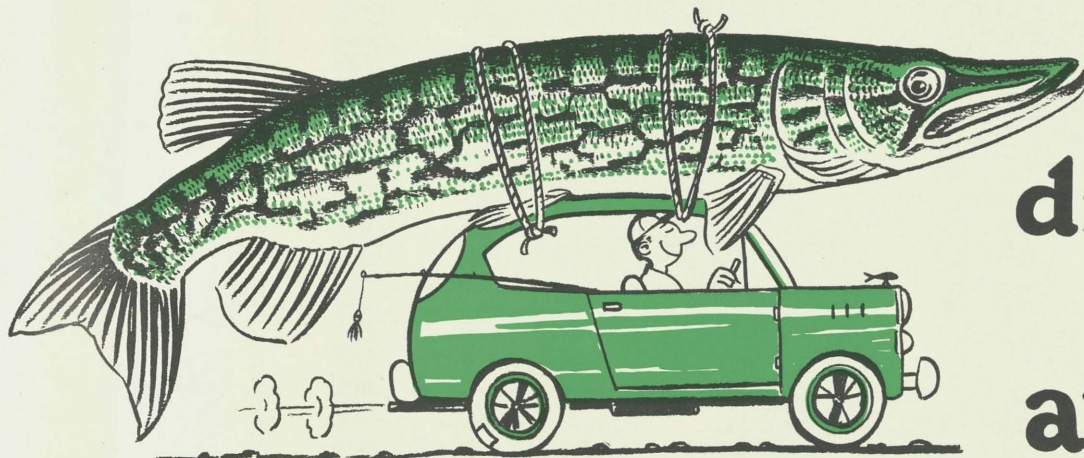
Answers to these and other questions can be found in the new "1968-69 Hunting Compendium and Regional Report" being made available by the Winchester-Western Division of Olin Mathieson Chemical Corporation.

The Compendium is highly illustrated and has 62 pages of valuable hunting information. It includes a 50-state survey compiled by Olin's Conservation Department with the cooperation of state fish and game departments. The annual survey is supervised by the company's Dr. Edward L. Kozicky, director of conservation, and John B. Madson, assistant director.

Regional reports by well known outdoor writers also are part of the Compendium: Pete Czura for Mid-America, John Gartner for the West, Grits Gresham for the South and Pete Kuhlhoff for the Northeast.

Copies of the new "1968-69 Hunting Compendium and Regional Report" are available to the public for 25 cents to cover postage and handling. Requests should be directed to the Winchester News Bureau, 460 Park Avenue, New York, N. Y. 10022. Bulk prices available on request.

For that BIG ONE that



didn't get away

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS SPECIES

LARGEMOUTH BASS

.....8 pounds or larger

CHAIN PICKEREL

.....4 pounds or larger

BLUEGILL (BREAM)

.....1 1/2 pounds or larger

SHELLCRACKER

.....2 pounds or larger

BLACK CRAPPIE

.....2 pounds or larger

RED BREAST

.....1 pound or larger

All fish must be taken from the fresh waters of the state of Florida, as defined by the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission. Fish must be caught on conventional fishing tackle, with artificial or live bait, in the presence of at least one witness.

The catch must be weighed and recorded at a fishing camp or tackle store within the state by the owner, manager, or an authorized agent of the respective establishment.

FLORIDA WILDLIFE'S FISHING CITATION

is available without charge, to any and all subscribers to Florida Wildlife Magazine, and their immediate families, who catch any of the fresh-water game fish of the prescribed species and size requirements. Citation, showing recorded date of the catch, will be mailed to the applicant upon receipt of the following application form that has been properly filled out and signed.

Only fishing citation applications received within 90 days from date of catch will be honored.

APPLICATION FOR FLORIDA WILDLIFE FISHING CITATION

The Editor, FLORIDA WILDLIFE

Date _____

Game & Fresh Water Fish Commission, Tallahassee, Fla.

Please send me the Florida Wildlife Fishing Citation with the inscribed data listed below:

Name (please print) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip No. _____

Species _____ Weight _____ Length _____

Type of Tackle _____

Bait or Lure Used _____

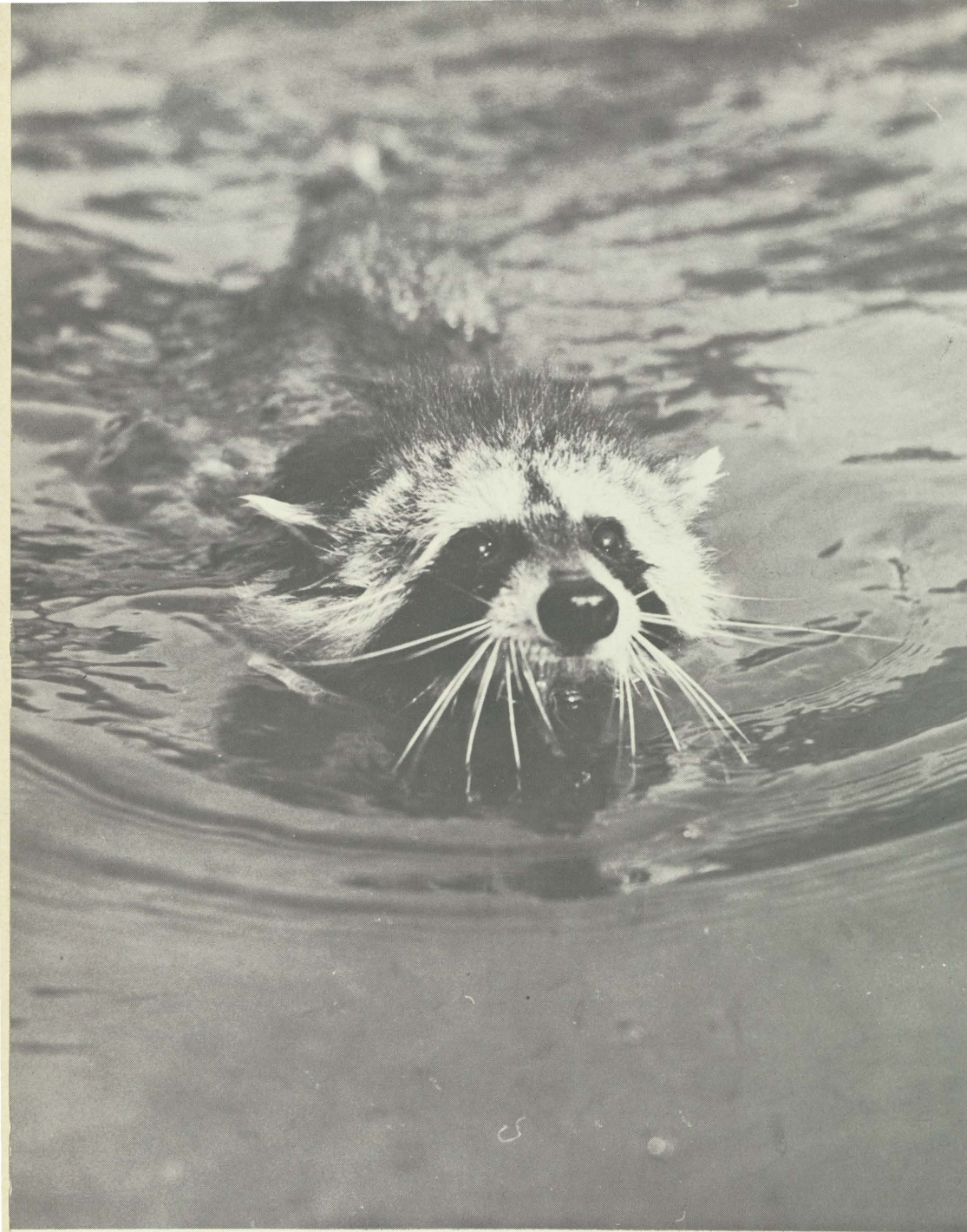
Where Caught _____ in _____ County

Date Caught _____ Catch Witnessed By _____

Registered, Weighed By _____ At _____

Signature of Applicant _____

CUT OUT AND SAVE THIS APPLICATION BLANK



Swimming Raccoon

Photo By Leonard Lee Rue III

FLORIDA WILDLIFE Magazine
Game & Fresh Water Fish Commission
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